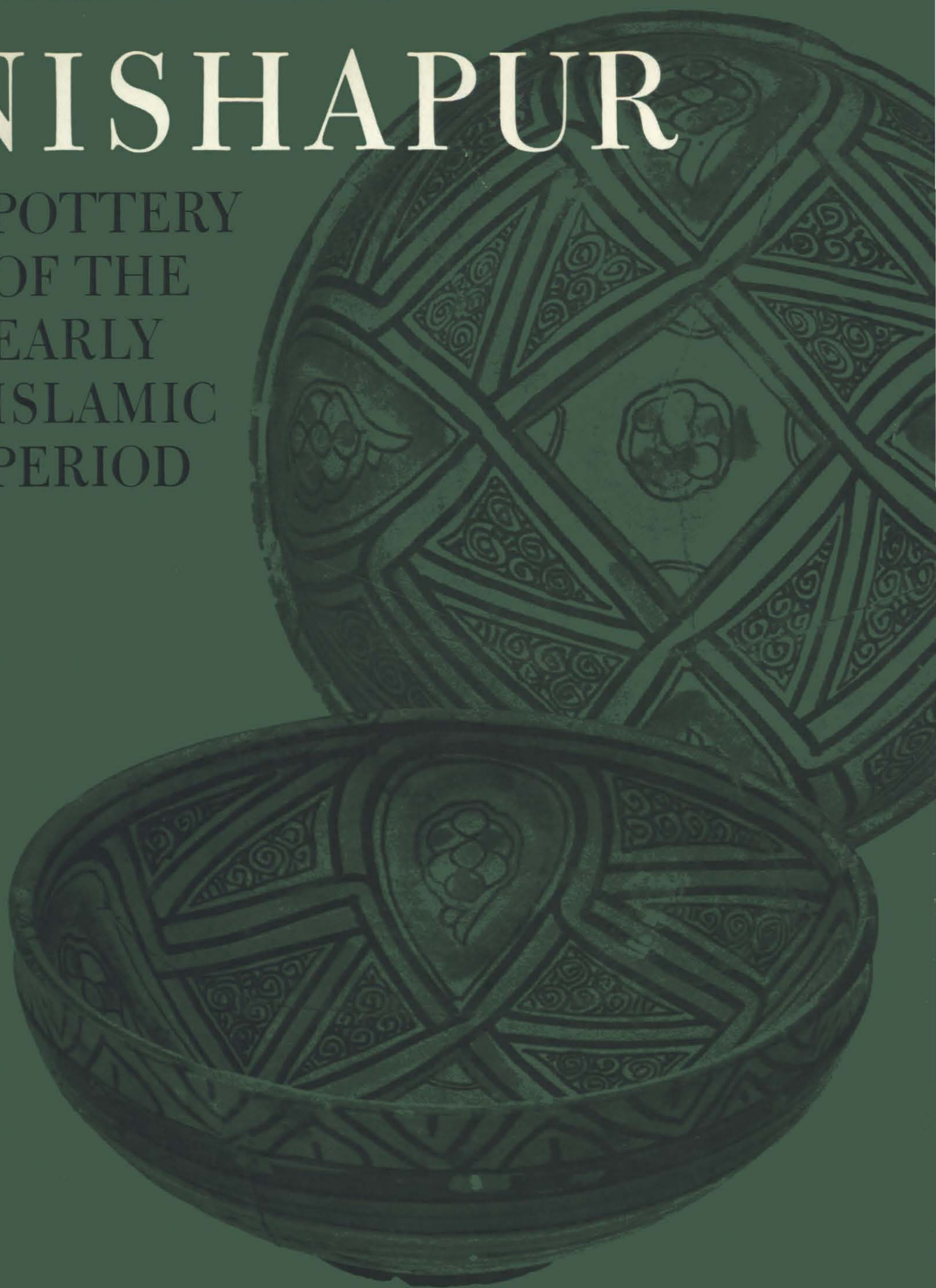


Charles K. Wilkinson

NISHAPUR

POTTERY
OF THE
EARLY
ISLAMIC
PERIOD



NISHAPUR: *Pottery of the Early Islamic Period*



Color Plate 1

Bowl; Inanimate buff ware

Group 1, 20 a,b; page 10

NISHAPUR:

Pottery of the Early Islamic Period

CHARLES K. WILKINSON, CURATOR EMERITUS, NEAR EASTERN ART
THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

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ON THE JACKET:

Inanimate buff ware bowl (Group 1, 47 a,b)

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To the late Walter Hauser
and to Joseph M. Upton,
with whom the author had the privilege
and pleasure of working in Nishapur.

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Foreword

The author of this book, our friend and colleague Charles Kyrle Wilkinson, is a man of many talents and of unusual and important achievements. During his forty-three years with this museum he achieved something of a record, as he worked with great distinction in what are now three separate departments—Egyptian Art, Ancient Near Eastern Art, and Islamic Art. Beginning as an artist copying tomb paintings in upper Egypt and the Khargeh Oasis for the Museum's Egyptian expeditions, he rose to the top of the curatorial profession. Appointed first in 1953 as Curator of Near Eastern Archaeology in the Department of Egyptian Art, he was made curator of the new Department of Ancient Near Eastern Art in 1956, and then, in 1959, he was named curator of the combined Ancient Near Eastern Art and Islamic Art departments.

Among Wilkinson's activities here, I should like to single out the extensive exhibition "Art Treasures of the Metropolitan," presented in 1959 when the Museum was being remodeled. Another of his major achievements was the new installation of ancient Near Eastern art at the north end of the building in 1960. To have a quick indication of the richness of the material and the informative and attractive manner in which it was shown, one recalls what Professor Diakonov, head of the Asian Institute in Leningrad, said when introducing Wilkinson at a conference held at the Hermitage Museum in 1971. Diakonov referred to Wilkinson as the man who had made the best archeological presentation he had ever seen in any museum. His most recent achievement, in 1972, has been an imaginative presentation of Islamic art from the ninth to the nineteenth century at the Brooklyn Museum.

Wilkinson participated in a leading capacity in two Metropolitan excavations in Iran—one, from 1932 to 1935, at the Sasanian settlement of Qasr-i-abu Nasr, near Shiraz, the other, from 1935 to 1940, at the Islamic site of ancient Nishapur, where the ceramics discussed in this book were found. During his tenure at the Museum, Wilkinson acquired many outstanding objects, particularly for the then newly developing Department of Ancient Near Eastern Art; at his instigation an important group of objects came to the Museum from the Joseph Brum-

mer sale. A gold cup from Marlik, decorated with gazelles, deserves individual mention among Wilkinson's acquisitions, as it is one of the finest pieces from the early Iranian civilization to be found outside Iran.

Retirement from the Museum as Curator Emeritus in 1963 has by no means meant a leisurely life for Charles Wilkinson. He immediately launched into other activities. In the fall of 1963 he produced an exhibition of Iranian pottery at the Asia House Gallery, for which he wrote an outstanding catalogue. Beginning in 1964 he served as Adjunct Professor of Islamic Art at Columbia University, only giving up this academic assignment in 1969 to become the first Hagop Kevorkian Curator of Middle Eastern Art and Archaeology at the Brooklyn Museum, the collection comprising both ancient and Islamic art of that area. In 1968, in conjunction with the Metropolitan, he presented the exhibition "Chess: East and West, Past and Present" at the Brooklyn Museum and coauthored its fine catalogue. It is not surprising that the Abegg-Stiftung of Bern asked him to write its first monograph, entitled *Two Ram-Headed Vessels from Iran*.

One may well ask how a scholar working with great distinction as artist, archeologist, curator, and teacher has been able to gain such success in so wide a variety of posts. The answer is first of all that Wilkinson has always had a highly discerning eye for artistic quality. It has stood him in good stead to have come from an artistic home (his father was an artist in stained glass) and to have been trained at the Slade School of Art at University College, London. Indeed, this artistic training has always been dear to him, and he has painted whenever possible all his life. In addition, it is Wilkinson's gift of empathy for ancient civilizations and the human aspect of their artifacts that has helped him immeasurably in his endeavors, both as curator and professor, to interpret these cultures of the past. Finally, it is his ability to communicate in a scholarly yet personal manner that has made him such a successful teacher.

The Museum's excavations at Nishapur, begun in 1935, were directed by Joseph M. Upton, Walter Hauser, and Charles Wilkinson, who brought out jointly the prelimi-

nary reports in the Museum's *Bulletin*. Then World War II came, digging halted, and the trio scattered. Upton joined the State Department as a Near Eastern expert. Hauser took up other functions at the Museum, assuming the post of librarian, and then died prematurely. Thus Wilkinson alone carried on the task of doing further research on the finds at Nishapur with the view of eventually publishing the results. He wrote a number of highly perceptive articles for various publications, including our *Bulletin*, seeking to elucidate the uses of a variety of Islamic objects, their social functions, and the techniques used to produce them. We hope that he will continue to publish the results of the excavations at Nishapur, one day giving us a volume on another important group of objects found, the stuccoed dadoes and the painted wall decorations.

From the beginning it was planned to publish a volume on the pottery alone, the most outstanding of the finds, but this goal was long delayed due to the lingering illness of Hauser, who was to have been Wilkinson's collaborator. Now, at last, the Museum is happy to present this most important work. It opens to scholars and laymen

alike a scientific and systematic way to study a large group of certifiably genuine material of great artistic merit. Nishapur pottery has become known primarily because of the Museum's excavations and follows in popularity only three other groups of Iranian pottery—those from Rayy (formerly called Rhages), Kashan, and Gurgan. Pottery from Nishapur is now in practically every museum and private collection of Iranian art throughout the world. Wilkinson has not, however, been satisfied with the mere listing of the excavations' finds and their thorough discussion. He has endeavored to place the various pottery types into the mainstream of ceramic history and to establish connections with other sites, particularly with Afrasiyab, near Samarkand in the Soviet Union, and with other centers in Iran. All these aspects make *Nishapur: Pottery of the Early Islamic Period* an important addition to the history of archeological research in Iran. In view of Wilkinson's profound knowledge of the whole period and of the wealth of material excavated, his book will surely be a milestone in the history of our knowledge of Near Eastern ceramics.

THOMAS HOVING
Director

Color Plates



Color Plate 2

Bowl; Animate buff ware

Group 1, 59; pages 17–19

Color Plate 3

Bowl; Graffiato color-splashed ware

Group 2, 56; page 67





Color Plate 4

Bowl; Graffiato color-splashed ware

Group 2, 66; page 69



Color Plate 5

Bowl; Polychrome on white ware

Group 4, 2; page 131

Color Plate 6

Bowl; Polychrome on white ware

Group 4, 48; pages 142–143

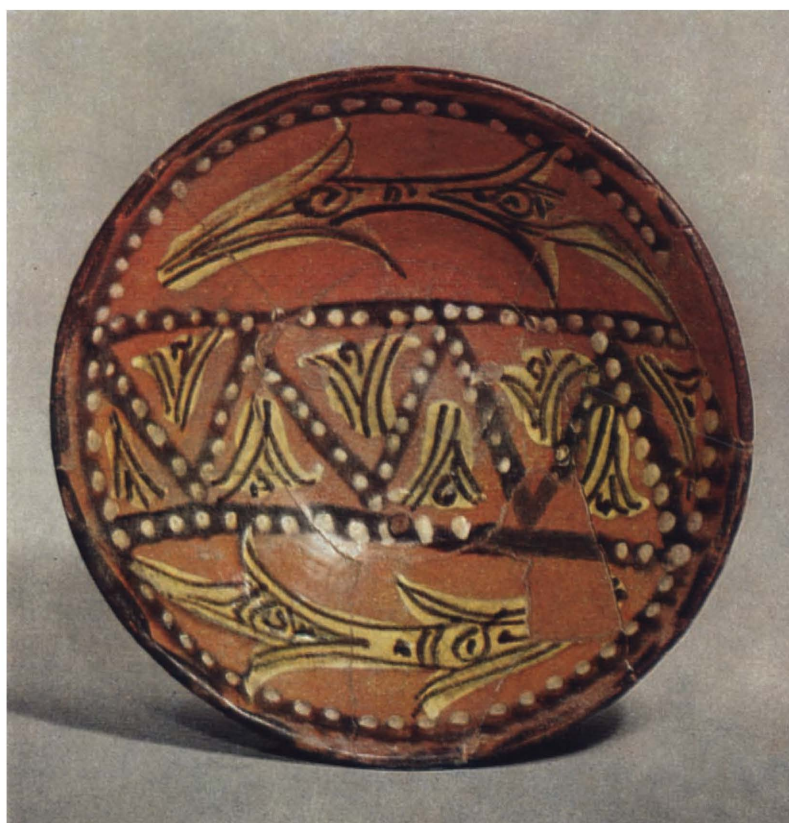




Color Plate 7

Dishes; Slip-painted ware
with colored engobe

Group 5, 17, 50; pages 163, 169





Color Plate 8

Bowl; Imitation luster ware

Group 6, 50; page 193

Color Plate 9

Bowl; Ware with yellow-staining black
Group 8, 9; page 218



Introduction



FIGURE 1

Introduction

Three decades ago the ancient city of Nishapur in the province of Khurasan in northeast Iran was excavated by the Iranian Expedition of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. The site was chosen because many references to the city in Arabic and Persian literature indicated that Nishapur had been founded in the Sasanian period (A.D. 322–636) and that it was for several centuries in the succeeding Islamic period a town of great importance, with flourishing arts and crafts. From such records the assumption was made that a controlled investigation of the site would produce material of importance and add to our knowledge of the city, the people who lived there, and their decorative arts. Prior to 1935 antiquities from Nishapur had been acquired only in a haphazard way: either by travelers and visitors to the town, including the writer Henry-René d'Allemagne, who was there in 1907 and illustrated some of his acquisitions (*Du Khorassan au pays des Backh-tiaris, trois mois de voyage en Perse*, Paris, 1911, II, p. 119), or from the antiquities market, which received objects produced by minor commercial excavations. An example from the latter source is a bowl in the Metropolitan Museum acquired in 1915 (15.85.1) labeled as "said to have come from Nishapur." Antiquities from Nishapur also reached the market indirectly as a result of the normal practice of local farmers digging away at the various mounds that dot the site to obtain their substance, the detritus of unbaked, sun-dried bricks, to scatter on their fields as fertilizer. The beneficial effect was doubtless due to the ammonia salts from the latrines. This procedure, undoubtedly of long standing, was reported in 1897 (Yate, *Khurasan and Sistan*, p. 410), and it has never abated.

In 1935, after the present writer had made a preliminary investigation of the site, the Museum's expedition conducted some test digs at selected points in the vast ruin fields of the ancient city. The tests confirmed the desirability of a sustained investigation, and a recommendation to this effect was made to the Museum's trustees by Maurice S. Dimand, the curator of Near Eastern Art. Approved by the trustees, the project was financed from the Rogers Fund, and excavations were carried out

under a concession granted the Museum by the Iranian government (Council of Ministers) on the recommendation of the Ministry of Education of Iran. Work began in 1935 and continued until 1947, with the active digging coming to an end in 1940, when the state of affairs caused by the outbreak of the Second World War made suspension advisable. A short season in 1947 was conducted to tidy up and to surrender the concession.

After the work began, attention was concentrated on a few rewarding sites from which large quantities of Islamic materials were obtained. This was chiefly pottery, most of it ranging in date from the ninth to the beginning of the thirteenth century. Half of the material, in accordance with the Iranian antiquities law of 1930, was turned over to the Muzé Iran Bastan in Teheran; the rest went to the Metropolitan. From the late André Godard, director general of the Iranian Antiquities Service, from Dr. Muhammed Mostafavi, his successor, and from other members of the Service, nothing but kindness and help were received. The divisions of the excavated material between the two parties were conducted under conditions ensuring the utmost fairness, with final exchanges being effected so that each museum should have an equal and truly representative collection.

The excavations were conducted by the same three who had constituted the Metropolitan's original Iranian Expedition and had worked at Qasr-i-abu Nasr, near Shiraz, from 1932 to 1935. They were Joseph M. Upton, the Museum's assistant curator of Near Eastern Art, the late Walter Hauser, who was transferred from the Egyptian Expedition, of which he had been a member since 1919, and the present writer, who had also served on the Egyptian Expedition, starting in 1920. Lindsley F. Hall, of the Egyptian Department, assisted for part of one season at Nishapur, making some drawings. The final season of 1947 was conducted by Walter Hauser and the writer. One or two pressing problems were solved in this season; a few kilns were cleared, the storerooms were emptied, and the concession was surrendered.

In addition to yielding a great quantity of earthenware, both glazed and unglazed, the excavations produced much

glass, some metalwork, many coins, and some remains of wall decoration in the form of ornamental bricks (a few of which were glazed), carved and painted stucco, and paintings in black or polychrome on white plaster. The pottery alone is presented in this publication. The pottery of Nishapur, if thoroughly studied—and study does not end, of course, with the work of the excavators—can give one many insights into the culture of Islam from the ninth century onward. As this pottery is compared with, or contrasted to, that which comes from other Islamic centers all the way from Egypt to Transoxiana, our knowledge of the ceramic history of the Near East is greatly increased. The excavations were comprehensive enough to prevent making the errors that are apt to arise from trial sondages. These, like any limited tests, can be misleading. Of this we had practical experience at Nishapur, and it will be seen that the findings of this book are at variance with some of our first reports published in the Museum's *Bulletin* (September, 1936, pp. 176–180; October, 1937, pp. 3–22; November, 1938, pp. 3–23; April, 1942, pp. 83–119). Unfortunately, some of the apparently well-based but actually erroneous dates of the first reports have found their way into books by other writers. Analyses of clay and glaze, originally intended as an appendix, are planned as a separate work for the future.

The pieces catalogued in this book are only those that were excavated by the Museum in the period 1935–1940 or the closing year of 1947, plus a few pieces that were acquired by the expedition directly from the peasants who discovered them while working in their fields or while building some new roads. Nothing presented here was purchased in the market or was found elsewhere than in Nishapur. This limitation has been maintained because of the great desirability of presenting a large body of material that genuinely came from the soil of Nishapur. The temptation to illustrate other material, reputed to come from Nishapur and close in style to our finds, was strong, since much of it is of fine quality and of great archeological interest. But to ensure that the material in the present publication is of impeccable origin, usable without fear as a basis for comparison, the temptation was rejected. The need for a strictly accurate yardstick has become urgent because of the flooding of the market with “Nishapur” pieces—a development due in no small degree to the success of the Museum's expedition. After the surrender of the concession, the sites were ransacked with the sole purpose of finding salable objects. “Nishapur” pottery now appears in the collections of many museums and private persons. While much of it undoubtedly comes from Nishapur, a great deal of it undoubtedly does not.

Some of it obviously comes from other sites, and some of it is not ancient at all, or consists of sherds so pieced together and completed that the result is a fraudulent mixture of unrelated parts. To add to the confusion, some of the pottery made in cities such as Gurgan, some two hundred and seventy miles west-northwest of Nishapur, and Juwain near Sabzewar, the ancient Baihaq, seventy miles west of Nishapur, and Qumis, still further west, closely resembles pottery made in Nishapur. The indiscriminate use of the name Nishapur sometimes makes the problem of determining what was made there, and what was imported there in ancient times, quite difficult.

Apart from the limitation just described, not all the pottery that was unearthed in the excavations is included here. The quantity was enormous, and the sherds numbered in the thousands. Furthermore, many of the vessels, more or less complete, were similarly decorated or offered variations so slight that the publication of all would serve no useful purpose. The necessary selection has not been made on aesthetic grounds. There has been no attempt to “show the best.” The intention is to present, in as practical a manner as possible, a sufficient body of authentic material to represent truly what was used in Nishapur in ancient times.

The period covered ends in the early thirteenth century, since the excavated areas were only sparsely populated after the sack of the city by the Mongols in 1221. Nishapur was making good glazed pottery from the fourteenth century on, as we know from stray sherds found there, but since these sherds were in no way connected with the Museum's controlled digging, they are not presented here. (They were presented at the Transactions of the Fifth International Iranian Congress of 1968.)

Here it may be said that it is not possible to give the entire picture of the pottery of Nishapur from the Sasanian period to modern times. The completion of the picture could have come only after properly conducted excavations subsequent to those of the Metropolitan Museum. Although we dug to virgin soil in a number of places, no sign was found of any Sasanian building, and the lack of foreknowledge that 1940 would be the last full season precluded the change in the *modus operandi* that would otherwise have been effected to obtain this basic and still missing data. The subsequent ravaging of the sites for commercial purposes has made any future attempt much more difficult, apart from its destruction of an incalculable amount of information concerning the pottery, the architecture, and the location of various areas of the ancient city known by name from the works of early writers. Some of this digging was technically legitimate, an unfortunate clause in the antiquities law of 1930 permitting commercial excavation so long as part of the finds are turned over to the Muzé Iran Bastan.

The intention was to give the Iranian Antiquities Service, at no cost to itself, knowledge of the ancient sites in Iran, but it is deplorable nonetheless that a site proved of the first importance should be opened to ruthless exploitation. Nishapur deserved a better fate than death by looting.

History of Nishapur

Present-day Nishapur is a town with a railroad station that serves as the marketing center of a large and productive area. The oldest part of it was built in the fifteenth century after the devastating earthquake of 1405. In the town stands a congregational mosque erected in 1493/4. The town was walled until the third decade of the present century, when a gateway (see illustration opposite p. 245 in Jackson, *From Constantinople to the Home of Omar Khayyam*) and some remaining stretches of wall were demolished on the order of H.I.M. Shah Riza Pahlavi, who wanted no walled towns to exist in his country. In the 1930s Nishapur had a bazaar half a mile in length, with dyers and felt makers, fabric printers, and a modest number of metalworkers. Potters made both glazed and unglazed pottery, but only in the commonest sort of ware, such as water jars, could their productions bear comparisons with the pottery of their early predecessors. None of the modern production was being exported farther than to the neighboring villages—a far cry from the flourishing trade described by a writer of the tenth century, who tells of each hostelry in the Nishapur bazaar “being as large as a bazar in other cities. It produces various kinds of fine linens, cotton goods, and raw silk, all of which (because of their excellence and abundance) are exported to other lands of Islam, and even of Christendom; for kings themselves and nobles value them as wearing apparel” (Ibn Hauqal [978] based on Istakhri [951], quoted in Jackson, *From Constantinople to the Home of Omar Khayyam*, p. 253). As a mercantile center Nishapur has indeed diminished, some of its former functions having passed on to Mashhad, and it is no longer, as it was in early Islamic times, a seat of military and political authority. This change undoubtedly resulted from the action of the Shi’ite Safavid kings who, in the sixteenth century, for political and economic ends, stimulated religious interest in the shrine of the eighth Imam, Ali ar-Rida (known locally as the Imam Riza), in Mashhad. This diversion of pilgrims from the Shi’ite shrines in Iraq to the one in Mashhad was encouraged right on into the present century, causing Mashhad to become wealthy and important to the detriment of Nishapur, which can boast only the shrine of a martyr related to the Imam, that of Muhammad Mahruq. He reposes today beneath a much re-

stored tile-covered dome built in the seventeenth century.

Nishapur is situated in a fertile plain, part of the great plateau of central Iran. The plain is rimmed to the north by high mountains of which the tallest peak, Mount Bin-alud, rises nearly seven thousand feet above the plain, or nearly eleven thousand feet above sea level. The mountains separate the Nishapur plain from a plain to the east in which Mashhad and the erstwhile city of Tus are situated, while to the west-northwest the plain of Gurgan extends to the southeast shore of the Caspian Sea. South of Nishapur the plain continues to be fertile for a few miles and then, for lack of water, fades into desert. The present town and the nearby land are watered to a small extent by rainfall but mostly from the mountains, atop which snow remains for most of the summer. The mountain water is carried in streams and underground aqueducts, called qanats, that start at the foothills. Qanats have long existed here, giving the disgruntled Arab traveler the opportunity to say, according to a writer of the eleventh century, that Nishapur would have been a most attractive town were the water above the ground and the people beneath it (Nasir ibn Khusrau, *Rélation du voyage*, appendix 11, p. 278).

The extensive plain of Nishapur, famous for its fertility and pleasant climate, is highly suitable for a settlement, and there has been a populous center here from prehistoric times. Furthermore, this strip of rich agricultural land, bounded by mountains to the north and desert to the south, has long served as a corridor for peoples, armies, merchants, and travelers of all kinds passing between Asia Minor and Mesopotamia to the west and Sogdiana, Transoxiana, India, and China to the east. It was not the only such route, for there was another to the north of the Nishapur mountains, but history makes it clear that the route past Nishapur was of the utmost importance. In the thirteenth century Yaqut, in his famous geographical dictionary, called Nishapur “the gateway to the east” (Barbier de Meynard, *Dictionnaire géographique*, p. 580).

Although there are historical references to more ancient settlements in this plain, no towns can be identified by name before the Sasanian period. Nishapur, by its very name, says that it was founded by Shapur I (c. 240–270) or Shapur II (307–379). (The origin of the city is well discussed in Jackson, *From Constantinople to the Home of Omar Khayyam*, pp. 248–250, and further helpful observations will be found in Frye, *The Histories of Nishapur*, p. 8.) In the Sasanian and early Islamic periods the city was also known as Aparshahr or Abarshahr and was the capital of a district so named. R. N. Frye has confirmed that Sasanian seal impressions as well as coins of these periods bear this name (Frye, *Iranica Antiqua*, VIII, p. 131, pl. xxx, no. 32). From Syriac sources it is known

that Nishapur was the seat of a Nestorian diocese in 430 (Jackson, *From Constantinople to the Home of Omar Khayyam*, p. 250, n. 4, for other references).

No real trace has yet been found of Sasanian Nishapur. Various writers have suggested that it lies in the ruin fields to the southeast of the present town. According to Lord Curzon (*Persia*, I, p. 262), the Sasanian remains are traceable around the tomb of Muhammad Mahruq, but in this he was probably mistaken. In 1908, Major P. M. Sykes, the British consul in Mashhad, a man much interested in Nishapur, concluded that the Sasanian city would be found in Janatabad, a village some twenty-four miles to the southeast (Sykes, *The Geographical Journal*, XXXVII, pp. 152–156). Although it is obvious that Nishapur, like some other ancient cities in western Asia, has not always been in one fixed location, in contrast to others that were rebuilt more than once on their ruins, the site of Janatabad does seem rather a long distance away. The Museum's excavations, with their negative evidence, strongly suggest that the Sasanian city existed outside any area so far examined, including Tepe Alp Arslan, the highest of the mounds in the ruin fields, and the apron-like mound adjoining it. In his thesis "The Topography and Topographic History of Nishapur" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1966), Richard W. Bulliet maintains that Tepe Alp Arslan was the Sasanian fortress and the apron the walled Sasanian city; both, he says, would be discovered if one dug deep enough. Though it is of course possible that some Sasanian evidence might be produced by large-scale digging there, I regard it as unlikely for two reasons. First, the Museum's test digs in those two areas, admittedly sondages only, produced almost nothing that was positively Sasanian; furthermore, in the considered opinion of the expedition the apron was not inhabited before the eighth century at the very earliest. The second reason is that an enormous amount of digging has gone on at Tepe Alp Arslan for at least a hundred years, not from the top down, but from the level in, and even so, no Sasanian antiquities have been discovered, except conceivably a stray coin or two. The Sasanian coins Yate says were brought to him (*Khurasan and Sistan*, p. 412) prove little since such coins were ordinarily carried from place to place. It is surely significant that during the Metropolitan's excavations over a period of five years only seven pre-Islamic coins were discovered, one Parthian and six Sasanian. Three of the Sasanian coins and the Parthian coin came from Sabz Pushan, a site that was thoroughly dug and is definitely post-Sasanian, and the other three came from a mound close to Tepe Alp Arslan, the Qanat Tepe, which is also post-Sasanian. Only one of the Sasanian coins was found at a low level; the finding of the others at higher levels confirms that they were kept long after they were minted. As for other

Sasanian antiquities in the Museum's excavations, only a few pieces of pottery were discovered, and they were of a type that persisted into the ninth century at least. This point was determined earlier at Qasr-i-abu Nasr, where the Museum's expedition found a great quantity of Sasanian pottery together with some other Sasanian material.

Wherever the Sasanian city was, near or far from present-day Nishapur and its ruin fields, it fell, according to the Arab historians Tabari (830–923) and Baladhuri (d. 892), to an army of the third orthodox caliph, Othman (644–656), led by 'Abdallah ibn 'Amir of Basra. The Arabs were then driven out after an uprising in Khurasan and in Tukharistan, to the east of Balkh, in 656–657. Then, in 661, 'Abdallah was reinstated by the first Umayyad caliph, Mu'awiya, and commissioned to conquer Khurasan and Sistan, a province to the south. From this time on, although the city's history was somewhat checkered by quarrels among the Arab leaders, the rulers of Nishapur were Muhammadans. A point to bear in mind is that Khurasan ("The Land of the Rising Sun") was much larger during the period under study here than it is now, and Nishapur was but one of its capital cities. The others were Merv, Herat, and Balkh. Merv, some two hundred miles north of Nishapur, is today in Turkmenistan; Herat and Balkh are in Afghanistan. All four are connoted in mentions of Khurasan in this book.

During the early period of Arab domination of Nishapur the conquering general, 'Abdallah ibn 'Amir, destroyed the Zoroastrian fire temple and built a congregational mosque on its site, allowing the Zoroastrians to build a new temple at some distance away (see original text of *Kitāb anwāl-i Nishāpūr*, f. 66b, as reproduced in Frye, *The Histories of Nishapur*). The physical remains of these buildings have been discovered. Although there is no contemporary evidence of this, it is likely that the Umayyad city was geographically identical with the Sasanian. The expedition's failure to find any trace of the transitional city stands in contrast to the findings at Qasr-i-abu Nasr, a true transitional site of the same period. One of the features of the work there was the discovery of both true Sasanian coins and coins of the early Islamic period in Sasanian style with Arabic superscriptions. The practice of continuing the Sasanian style was sustained for some time and has been noted at other sites, such as Rayy (George C. Miles, *The Numismatic History of Rayy*, New York, 1938, pp. 5–7). That not a single such coin was found at Nishapur must indicate that no buildings of the Sasanian or the early Umayyad period were uncovered. By extension, no Sasanian or early Umayyad pottery will be found in this publication, beyond, perhaps, a stray survival.

One of the most important events in Arab history of the early Islamic era was the change from the Umayyad

caliphate, with its seat in Syria, to the Abbasid caliphate established in Iraq. The rebellion against the Umayyads was begun in Khurasan by a Persian, Abu Muslim, who, under a black flag, the emblem of the insurgent Abbasids, entered Nishapur as conqueror in 748. By 750 the Umayyad caliphate was extinguished, and Abu'l Abbas al-Saffah was seated as the first Abbasid caliph. With this change, the Iranians were in the ascendant for many years, their status vis-à-vis the Arabs vastly improved.

While he was governor of Khurasan, Abu Muslim built in the eastern cities of Merv, Samarkand, and Nishapur, and in Nishapur a few coins have been found that bear witness to his power. Following his death—he was assassinated in 755 by the second Abbasid caliph, al-Mansur—seventy-five years passed during which there are no historical references to construction in Nishapur. In this period there were several insurrections against the caliphate and many changes of governor. That Nishapur was an important place at this time is obvious from the number of times it is mentioned by contemporary writers and from the fact that two caliphs, before succeeding to that high office, were honorary governors there: al-Mahdi in 758 and al-Ma'mun in 796. The latter lived in Nishapur six years before he was installed at Baghdad. During the caliphate of his father, Harun al-Rashid, we hear of his being given by Ali ibn Isa, governor of Khurasan from 796 to 806, a magnificent gift of Chinese porcelain. This is a matter of some interest in regard to the pottery of Nishapur in that the remains of Chinese porcelain and pottery were found in the Museum's excavations.

After playing its part in the rise to power of the Abbasid dynasty, Khurasan became, in the ninth century, a virtually autonomous province. The beginning of this development can be said to be Caliph al-Ma'mun's appointment of a new governor, in 820, for the eastern region. This ruler, Tahir ibn al-Husain, an able and successful general, nicknamed Ambidexter, had his capital at Merv. The dynasty that he established, and that flourished mostly within the bounds of Khurasan, is known as the Tahirid. As far as Nishapur is concerned, the most important of the Tahirids was 'Abdallah, the second of the line, who chose Nishapur as his capital, deeming its climate better and its larger population generally more agreeable than that of Merv.

'Abdallah ibn Tahir built his palace and his officers' quarters in the most famous of the suburbs of Nishapur, Shadyakh—distinguished, be it observed, from Nishapur itself. The name presents some difficulties: first, because it is sometimes identified with Nishapur itself, and also because it has not always been ascribed to precisely the same place. In the twentieth century the name has been associated with an area enclosed by high ruined walls to the west of the shrine of Muhammad Mahruq and the

tomb that is assumed to be that of Omar Khayyam; this is where Shadyakh is indicated on Sykes's map (*The Geographical Journal*, XXXVII, p. 153). There is reason, as will be seen later, to believe that the original Shadyakh lay to the east of this walled enclosure.

That Nishapur was vastly improved as a city under 'Abdallah ibn Tahir is suggested by the fact that he spent a million dirhems of his own fortune in building qanats (Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, p. 157). The Tahirid dynasty, after about fifty years, was displaced by the Saffarid, which, like its predecessor, was more or less autonomous, operating sometimes with and sometimes without the caliph's approval. Military adventurers, the Saffarids came to power under Ya 'qub ibn Layth al Saffar ("the Coppersmith"), who expanded his sphere of influence from the province of Sistan, south of Khurasan, to include Fars, of which Shiraz was the capital. By 872 he had taken Khurasan from the Tahirids. His brother and successor, 'Amr ibn Layth, ruled all these provinces and Kurdistan as well. 'Amr ibn Layth did much to enhance the importance of Nishapur, among other things building an elaborately decorated Friday mosque, in which, supposedly, was a pulpit of the time of Abu Muslim, and rebuilding the government palace of 'Abdallah ibn Tahir. Like the Tahirids, the Saffarids made Nishapur their capital.

Contemporary with the Tahirid and Saffarid rulers in Khurasan was a dynasty in Transoxiana, that of the Samanids. As were the Tahirids, the Samanids were placed in power by Caliph al-Ma'mun. Of Persian origin, from Balkh, they began their rule in Samarkand in 819, later moving their capital to Bukhara. They owed nominal fealty to the caliph, but, like the rulers in Khurasan, they exercised their independence. Early in the tenth century, with dramatic success, they greatly increased their domain, first of all by defeating the Saffarids and capturing Khurasan. Within a short time their domain extended from India to Iraq.

Although the Samanids' capital remained Bukhara, there can be no doubt of Nishapur's increasing prosperity. This is evident from the accounts of contemporary writers, which in some respects are more precise and credible than those mentioning the Sasanian city. Ibn Hauqal speaks of Nishapur in glowing terms, claiming that no other city in Khurasan was more healthy and populous. Both he and Istakhri give impressions of the town, its chief buildings, the Friday mosque that 'Amr ibn Layth had embellished and the governor's palace that he had built, and the bazaars and crafts practiced within them, especially the weaving. The city was now an international trading center with merchants from Iraq and Egypt frequenting it. It had special bazaars for such cities as Gurgan, Rayy, and Khwarizm, and it served as an entrepôt for Fars, Sind, and Kerman (Bosworth, *The*

Ghaznavids, p. 150). The writers Istakhri and Maqdisi (Jackson, *From Constantinople to the Home of Omar Khayyam*, p. 252) used Nishapur as a standard against which other cities were judged.

The reign of the Samanids came to a close, as far as Nishapur was concerned, around the end of the tenth century. To the west they had to yield their gains to the Buwayhids, who, at the height of their power, dominated the caliphate, to the point of blinding one caliph (al-Mustakfi) and appointing his successor (al-Muti'). Furthermore, there was much warring among the Samanids and the Turkish generals and governors they had used for their purposes. These disputes led eventually to the supremacy of the Ghaznavids, who in their early days had served the Samanids. Mahmud of Ghazna (969–1030), who had commanded the army in Khurasan on behalf of the Samanids, with his headquarters in Nishapur, finally established himself in their stead, and in 999 he was invested with the authority of Caliph al-Qadir, whose name was restored to the noonday prayers on Fridays. In Shadyakh, Mas'ud of Ghazna (1030–40) built a palace with courts and pavilions and another for the use of his minister, Hasanak, which was later used for official visitors (Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, p. 161).

From the Ghaznavids, power passed to the Seljuqs in 1037. Of Turkish origin, the Seljuqs had come south, as other Turks had before them, into the northern parts of Khurasan. Recognized at first as Ghaznavid auxiliaries, they soon became stronger than their masters, and in 1038 they seized Nishapur, where Toghril Beg ascended Mas'ud's throne at Shadyakh and declared himself sultan, while his brother, Chaghri Beg, installed himself at Merv. Toghril continued his advance westward and victoriously entered Baghdad itself in 1055, when he had his title confirmed by the caliph. Toghril's nephew, Alp Arslan, was governor of Nishapur from 1059 to 1063, lived there from time to time, and is remembered in the name of the highest of the mounds in the ruin fields, Tepe Alp Arslan.

With the advent of the Seljuqs, Nishapur became part of an enormous empire. The city flourished for a considerable period, and many buildings were erected. One of the early records of it at this time is by Nasir-i Khusrau, who visited there in 1046 and speaks of the building of a madraseh, or religious college (Nasir ibn Khusrau, *Rélation du voyage*, p. 6).

In the twelfth century the city suffered major disasters: earthquakes in 1115 and 1145 and devastation by pillage and fire at the hands of the Ghuzz Turks in 1153. After these invaders had been driven off by one of the mamlukes of the Seljuq sultan Sanjar, al-Mu'ayyad, the inhabitants were settled in Shadyakh, and Shadyakh now became the town of Nishapur—at least this is the account of Yaqut, who, however, did not visit Nishapur (Barbier

de Meynard, *Dictionnaire géographique*, pp. 578–582).

Mu'ayyad was in turn slain by the Khwarizm-Shah Tekish (1172–99), who established himself in Nishapur in 1180. A number of coins have survived as evidence of his power there. After conquering Khurasan, Tekish extended his domination to Bukhara and Samarkand in Transoxiana.

Despite these reversals of fortune, Yaqut, in 1216, considered Nishapur the richest, most flourishing, and populous city on earth (Barbier de Meynard, *Dictionnaire géographique*, p. 580). Five years afterward came the devastating conquest by the Mongols under the leadership of Toluy, the son of Chingis Khan. All writers agree that Nishapur and its inhabitants were treated without mercy and that Shadyakh was completely destroyed. Hamdallah Mustaufi of Qazvin, writing in 1340, related how in 1232, eleven years after the Mongol devastation, "Shadyakh" was laid in ruins by an earthquake, following which a new city was built in another part of the plain (*The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat-al-Qulub Composed by Hamdallah Mustawfi of Qazwin in 740 [1340]*, translated by G. Le Strange, London, 1919, p. 147).

But there is no point in pursuing further this account of disasters and rebuildings, for, with the Mongol period, we are at the close of the history that is covered in the present study. No excavations were made in the later ruins.

Description of the Excavations

The excavations were made at a number of places; in some only briefly and on a small scale, in others on a larger scale, in an intensive way, for more than one season. It would have been gratifying if we could have associated any of the buildings uncovered with the names mentioned by the early historians and travelers, some of whom described the contemporary scene while others incorporated descriptions written in the past. However, a close association between named buildings and excavated structures cannot be made, and with one exception it has been felt better not to harden supposition into suggestion. Concerning the various sites excavated, the expedition was seriously hampered by the proximity, and in some instances, invasion, of cultivated areas. Under the law, cultivators could claim damages or the physical restitution of the site.

For simple practicality it was necessary to name the sites. Local names, if such existed, were adopted. Some of these have historical connotations—Tepe Iskander, Tepe Alp Arslan, Shadyakh—but even so are misleading, as even a surface examination, aided by the breaches made by peasants, indicates. (Of these three sites only Tepe

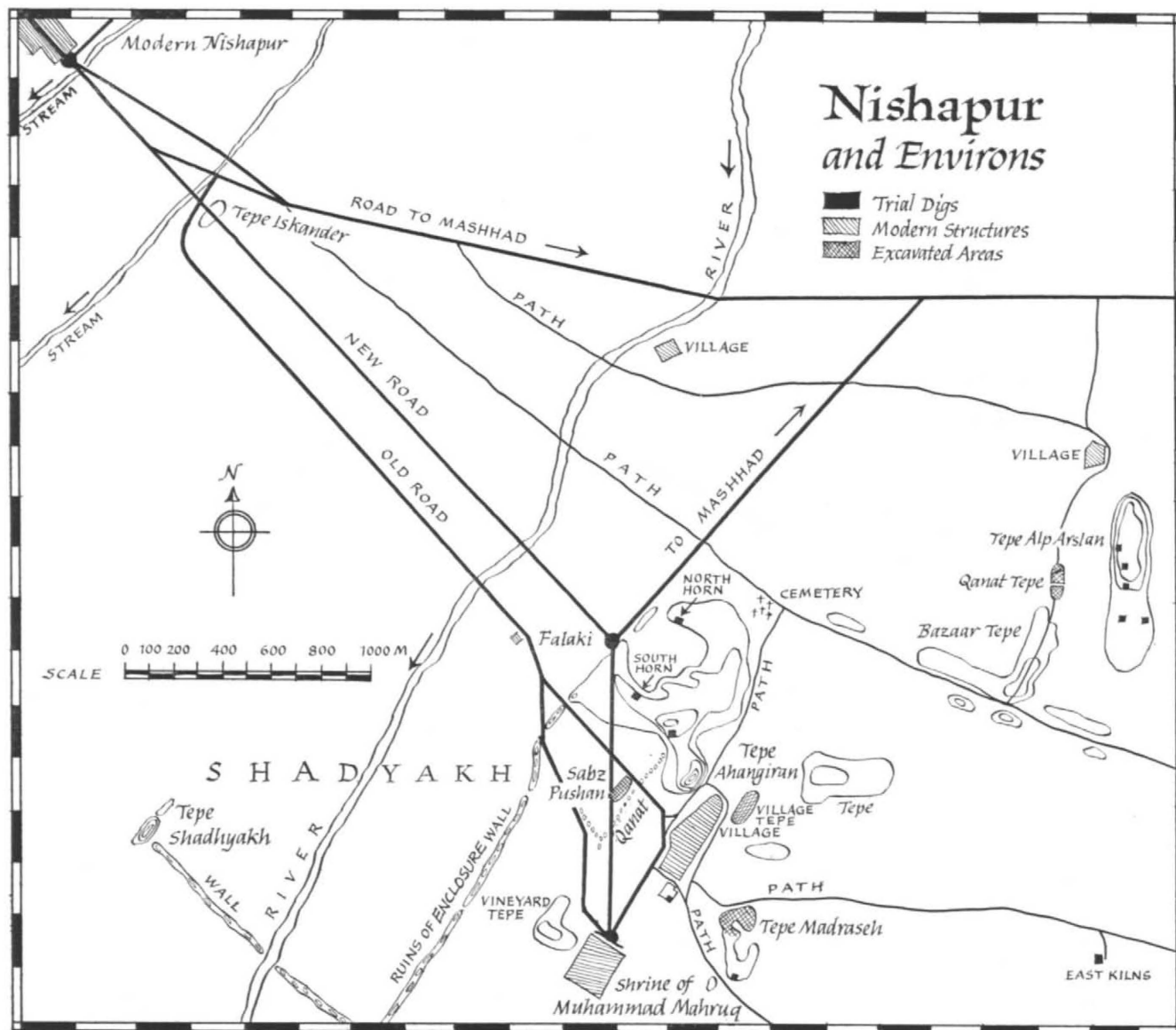


FIGURE 2

Alp Arslan was investigated.) Tepe Iskander, for example, about a mile east of the present town, would seem to be the site of a fourteenth-century building. And the area now known as Shadyakh is probably not the original site of the suburb. The name of Tepe Alp Arslan, which has been in use since at least 1897, is plausible in that the site was inhabited in Seljuq times, as the name suggests. Other local names were descriptive, such as Sabz Pushan (Green Mound), although its green was barely noticeable. Tepe Madraseh suggests that the mound was once the site of a religious college, and indeed Nishapur was famous for such establishments. The excavation at Tepe Madraseh did not confirm the presence of a madraseh, though part of the site was definitely used for religious

purposes. When places were excavated that had no local name, the expedition gave them a name, usually derived from location: Village Tepe, Vineyard Tepe, Falaki, and Qanat Tepe. North Horn and South Horn were named from the shape of a large mound of which these sites were the extremities. One excavation was named after what was probably the site's original function: the Bazaar.

None of the sites, which will now be described in some detail, was functioning before the latter part of the eighth century at the earliest. Most of them were extinguished when the Mongols ravaged Nishapur and Shadyakh in 1221, though one or two areas continued to a twilight after that date.



FIGURE 3 A typical dwelling at Sabz Pushan.

Sabz Pushan: The first mound to be thoroughly cleared, this was an oval area about three miles southeast of the present town and less than a half a mile north of the tomb of Muhammad Mahruq. Illicit digging had revealed that the site would be profitable in that carved plaster wall decoration had been exposed (*Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, October, 1937, figs. 31–45). Operations continued here throughout three seasons. The site was found to consist of rather small houses arranged close together, most of them with small interior courts (Figure 3). Running across the mound was a small alley. As some of the houses were important enough to be decorated with carved plaster dadoes, painted walls, and other architectural details (*Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, November, 1938, figs. 4–9), they were obviously once occupied by people of means, perhaps merchants, or less probably, officials. One of the features of the digging here was the retrieval of an extraordinary number of coins, more being found here than in any other comparable area. Their number would not have been noteworthy had they been together in a cache, but such was not the case: except for two found side by side, all were found singly. The following list, the work of Joseph M. Upton, who studied the coins at Nishapur, shows that no fewer than 376 coins came from this small site. Of the total, 90 were

COINS FROM SABZ PUSHAN

Parthian (312 B.C.–A.D. 77)	1
Sasanian (3rd–7th century)	3
1st half 8th century	12
2nd half 8th century	118
8th/9th century	24
Abbasid type (9th/10th century)	102
Seljuq (11th/12th century)	3
Tekish (late 12th century)	8
Ilkhan (13th/14th century)	3
Post-Ilkhan, including modern	12

in too poor condition to be identified. A single Parthian coin and three Sasanian ones must be considered unmeaningful survivals; that is, they must have been brought to Sabz Pushan from some other place.

The great massing of eighth- and early ninth-century coins at first convinced the expedition that some of the pottery, glazed and unglazed, should be dated as early as the eighth century. However, the work at Tepe Madraseh, a more extensive site that was easier to separate into different periods, suggested caution on this point, particularly as the pottery from the two sites could not be differentiated.

Many of the earliest coins from Sabz Pushan were not at the lowest level, a circumstance pointing to the fact that early Islamic coins remained in circulation a very long time. This numismatic peculiarity was also noticed by George C. Miles in the excavations at Rayy in the 1930s. Despite the presence of the late coins at Sabz Pushan, the absence, except for a few stray pieces, of alkaline-glazed pottery here shows clearly that the site was to all intents and purposes abandoned by the twelfth century. Quite possibly it did not recover after the earthquake of 1145 or after the destruction of the city by the Ghuzz Turks in 1153.

Tepe Madraseh: The largest and probably the most important area excavated, this mound was situated some five hundred yards east-northeast of the tomb of Muhammad Mahruq and almost two miles southwest of Tepe Alp Arslan. The highest part of the mound was near a path proceeding eastward and leading to a group of kilns. Close to the path, and undoubtedly extending under it, were some twelfth-century graves, evidenced by a slab that belonged to the fifth century of the Hegira (1106–1202). The final *س* (*sin*) makes it clear that the century was the fifth (Figure 4). The highest point on the mound proved to be the top part of a wall nearly fifteen feet thick, once a support for a vault that covered a prayer

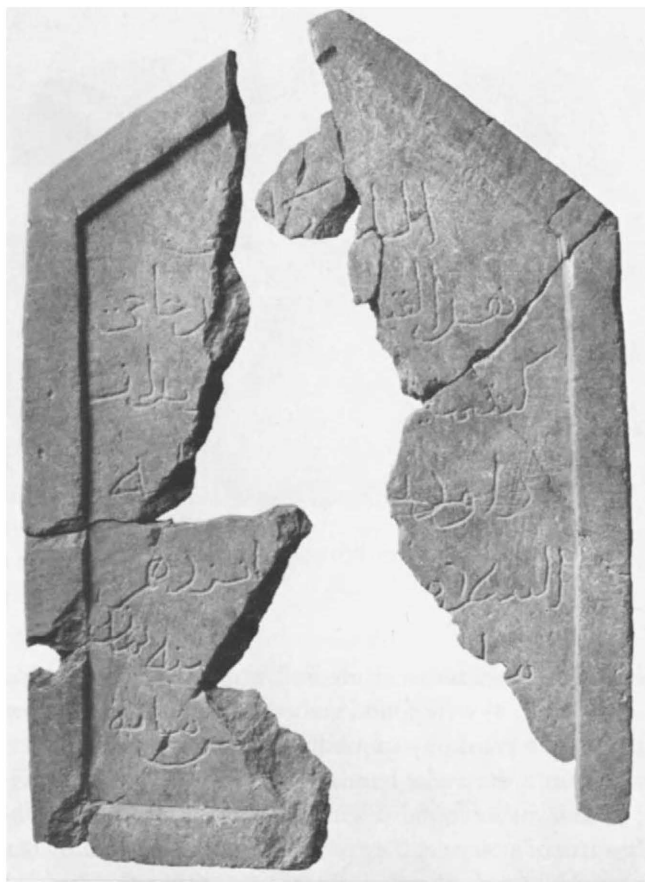


FIGURE 4 Gravestone found at Tepe Madraseh. About 1106–1202.

FIGURE 5 Fragment of a blue alkaline-glazed dish found at Tepe Madraseh.

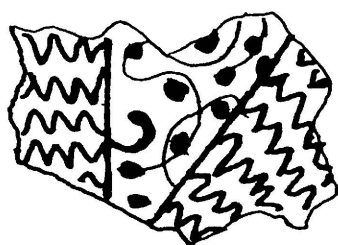


FIGURE 6

Excavation at Tepe Madraseh showing a prayer niche at the right.



hall. Open at one end, closed at the other, the hall was furnished with a mihrab that had undergone various re-decorations (*Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, April, 1942, figs. 12–14). A portion of the floor was dug down to virgin earth, and in the fill three coins were found, one of 775/6 and two of about 785, giving a post quem dating. The hall had remained in use until the twelfth or thirteenth century. A burned-brick minaret was added to it in the eleventh or twelfth century, breaking into the previous construction at the side (*ibid.*, fig. 17). Facing the hall was a deep flight of stairs leading down to an octagonal chamber through which flowed a qanat. The latest date of use of this underground source of water was shown by a sherd of the late thirteenth century, part of a blue-glazed dish with black underpainting, found there (Figure 5). This type of vessel is dated by Kühnel to the end of the fourteenth century (*Islamische Kleinkunst*, p. 102, fig. 66) and by Lane to the second half of the thirteenth century (*Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 92A).

Abutting the prayer hall behind the qibleh wall were large rooms including a kitchen (*Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, April, 1942, fig. 16). Behind the kitchen was an open square, an area that could not be excavated since it was under cultivation (*ibid.*, fig. 11, showing prayer hall at upper right). The east side of the square connected directly with a field, also under cultivation. On the south and west sides of the square were large halls behind piers and corridors with pointed vaults (*ibid.*, fig. 10). The halls had very substantial walls of sun-dried brick, ranging in thickness from nearly five to six and one-half feet. On the south side of the square were three mihrabs, two

with rectangular recesses, the other a shallow one of plaster headed by a cinquefoil, a shape also found in the back of one of the recessed mihrabs (Figure 6). The layout of the buildings on the three sides of the square was on such a scale, and some of the piers and walls were so richly adorned in carved and painted plaster, that this was obviously no ordinary assembly of private dwellings but rather something of an official nature, a palace or a governmental center. Since the plan showed a change of orientation, apparently at an early date before the rooms were subdivided, the hypothesis suggests itself that the building was started by 'Abdallah ibn Tahir, reconstructed by 'Amr ibn Layth toward the end of the ninth century, and then altered by subdivisions in the Samanid period. Were this identification correct, it would establish the proper location of the original Shadyakh, although that most important suburb, which to all intents and purposes became Nishapur itself, extended much beyond the complex of buildings contained within the mound. It is unfortunate that the untimely end of the expedition prevented the entire clearing of this mound; it was subsequently wrecked by commercial digging. Except for those adjoining the prayer hall, the other buildings excavated by the expedition were abandoned at some considerable time before the Mongol invasion. In these abandoned areas there was an absence of the typical alkaline-glazed wares of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.

COINS FROM TEPE MADRASEH

2nd half 8th century	42
8th/9th century	23
1st half 9th century	9
2nd half 9th century	6
1st half 10th century	6
2nd half 10th century	20
11th century	3
Seljuq (?) (11th/12th century)	1
Tekish (late 12th century)	9
Mongol (13th century)	4

The coins from this site, tabulated by Upton, numbered over one hundred and were mostly of the eighth to tenth century, only seventeen being of later times. One of the early coins has already been referred to. Another, of Harun al-Rashid (763-809), was found on the floor of the lowest level near a solid pier, suggesting that no building took place in this area at an earlier period, particularly in view of the fact that only one coin was found of the first half of the eighth century.

A direct connection between building and pottery was

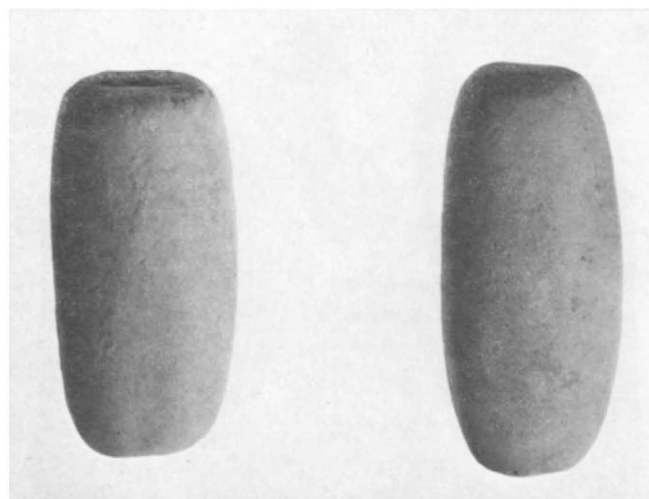


FIGURE 7 "Ingots" of brownish raw clay excavated at Tepe Madraseh.

established when two crude buff ware bowls (mentioned at Group 1, 4) were found embedded in one of the major walls. The proximity of a kiln connection was suspected when, in a deep pit, hundreds of "ingots" of well-levigated clay were found (Figure 7). Shaped like the handle-bar grip of a bicycle, they measure three and a half inches long. However, no spurs, wasters, or other debris associated with the production of kilns were discovered. There remained the possibility that these were pieces of edible clay, for which Khurasan was famous, or a supply intended for sealing purposes.

Qanat Tepe: This small mound, which was completely cleared, was a narrow strip about seventy yards long, disappearing under a path close to the west side of Tepe Alp Arslan. The path led to the village of Shahabad. The site had been dug commercially before 1935, and the presence of some visible painted plaster decoration suggested the desirability of excavation. The process was encouraged by the headman of the adjoining village of Turatabad, close to Tepe Alp Arslan on the northwest side, who was also the local landlord. He had acquired a large hoard of Samanid silver coins and claimed that they had been found in the vicinity.

The upper level of the mound was in ruinous condition. Nevertheless, one small area proved to have been the site of kilns for the production of a special type of unglazed vessel, the sphero-conical bottle (Group 12, 113-117). Also found were lumps of transparent glass or glaze, spurs, and suchlike kiln debris, including wasters of gritty-bodied alkaline-glazed ware, some of these of fine quality. The kilns that produced this material were not found, but they were undoubtedly not far away. Perhaps they lay beneath the path or beyond it, and thus



FIGURE 8

The excavation at Qanat Tepe. In the foreground is a room with recessed prayer niches flanked by engaged columns.

were not excavated, or perhaps they had been destroyed before 1935.

As at Sabz Pushan, the site was covered with small dwellings. One room had a rectangular recessed prayer niche flanked by colonnettes (Figure 8); this replaced, at a higher level, an earlier niche that had been destroyed (*Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, April, 1942, fig. 5). Another structure was a bathhouse with painted wall decorations (*ibid.*, fig. 6). There was also, rising from the lowest level, a circular bastion of sun-dried brick. This was dug to its foundation, and here was found a coin of 753–766, just as in the fill below the lowest floor of the prayer hall at Tepe Madraseh. The coins from Qanat Tepe, according to Upton's tabulation, showed three Sasanian examples, one found at the deep level, the others found at high levels. All three must be considered keepsakes, even the one from the deep level, in view of the Islamic coin also found here. Of the rest of the coins found, most are of the eighth or eighth/ninth century. After the Ghaznavid period—eleventh century—there are but single examples.

Upton examined the hoard of 227 silver coins owned by the headman of Turbatabad and found that it contained 114 of Nuh ibn Mansur (976–997), of which 64 were minted in Nishapur, Bukhara being a poor second. Most of the rest of the coins were Buwayhid, some (of Rukn-ad-Dawla, 944–977) minted in Nishapur.

Most of the pottery found in the Qanat Tepe was glazed earthenware. The fact that kilns near one end of the mound had produced alkaline-glazed pottery indicated that the mound had still been inhabited in the twelfth century. It may be noted, however, that kilns are always built on the outer edges of a town because of the ill-smelling smoke they produce.

COINS FROM QANAT TEPE

Sasanian (3rd–7th century)	3
1st half 8th century	4
2nd half 8th century	72
8th/9th century	31
1st half 9th century	13
2nd half 9th century	1
1st half 10th century	1
2nd half 10th century	12
Ghaznavid (11th century)	8
Seljuq (?) (11th/12th century)	1
Tekish (late 12th century)	1
Mongol (13th century)	1

Village Tepe: Named by the expedition for its proximity to a small village on the old road to the tomb of Muhammad Mahruq, this small, elongated mound (Figure 9) was composed of the remains of houses of no great size. Like those of Sabz Pushan, they had undergone many

COINS FROM VILLAGE TEPE

1st half 8th century	11
2nd half 8th century	5
1st half 9th century	5
10th century	3
Tekish (late 12th century)	3
Mongol (13th century)	2



FIGURE 9
Village Tepe before excavation.

changes in the form of little additions and small alterations. In addition, the site was riddled with wells, pits, and sinkaways, making any clear-cut stratification difficult. The occupation of the site had continued in the Seljuq period. This time span is made clear by the pottery found, which closely resembles that of Sabz Pushan. However, a considerable quantity of alkaline-glazed ware was found in the upper level, indicating that the site, unlike Sabz Pushan, was fully occupied until the Mongol invasion. It probably survived to a limited extent after that event.

Falaki: This site, the northwestern tip of an extensive mound (Figure 10), some of which was irrigated and under cultivation, was partially cleared at the request of the governor of Nishapur, who was building a teahouse and a circular garden (*falaki*) on a newly made road leading to the tombs of Omar Khayyam and Muhammad Mahruq. The dig here was of brief duration and too hur-

ried to give a true perspective of the course of events. The pottery indicated that the site was occupied longer than Sabz Pushan and that it flourished at least until the Mongol invasion and perhaps to some extent even later. The coins found here, though few in number, appear to confirm this.

At the end of the mound in which the expedition's site was located was a high mound known locally as Tepe Ahangiran. This was not excavated. It has reportedly been completely destroyed since 1947.

COINS FROM FALAKI

2nd half 8th century	1
Tekish (late 12th century)	5
2nd half 13th century	1
14th century	2
Modern	1

FIGURE 10
Falaki under excavation.



South Horn: Southeast of Falaki the principal mound forms a large crescent, and its tips were named by the expedition North Horn and South Horn (Figure 11). The sondage at North Horn was soon abandoned as unprofitable since only the meanest kind of ware was recovered there. At the South Horn the results were more fruitful, even though no major digging was done there. Near the top were found signs of late twelfth- or early thirteenth-century occupancy, notably a blue-glazed tile (*Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, October, 1937, fig. 22) and part of a Kashan luster tile. At the edge of the site were the obvious remains of a pottery shop that specialized in the manufacture of molded ware. The late occupancy of South Horn was supported by the coins found. These were predominantly Tekish (1172–99)—that is, after the

fired, indicating that the site had been hurriedly abandoned. These were late pieces, of the twelfth or early thirteenth century, suggesting that the terminal date was either the Mongol invasion, or, more probably, the earthquake of 1280.

COINS FROM THE KILN NEAR
SABZ PUSHAN

2nd half 8th century	3
Tekish (late 12th century)	13
Post-12th century	6



FIGURE 11
North Horn (left) and South Horn
being dug by the Museum
expedition.

COINS FROM SOUTH HORN

2nd half 8th century	4
8th/9th century	2
Tekish (late 12th century)	25
Mongol (13th century)	5

removal of the people of “Nishapur” to “Shadyakh.” These findings at South Horn presented a striking contrast to those at Sabz Pushan, less than a mile away.

Kiln near Sabz Pushan: A sondage made southeast of the South Horn, at the edge of a large, irregular mound that included both the “horns,” disclosed a kiln site. Here was found all the detritus associated with the manufacture of unglazed earthenware vessels. In addition there were some mold-made pieces that had never been

Vineyard Tepe: So named by the expedition, this mound lay a few hundred yards northeast of the tomb of Muhammad Mahruq and a similar distance northwest of Tepe Madraseh. It proved difficult to dig because of the great furrows that had been dug in it for the cultivation of grapevines. The area excavated was so restricted that a full understanding of the buildings contained within it could not be gained. It was evident nevertheless that they had been important. The area contained a small alley carefully plastered with white stucco, with raised pavements at the sides, that wound between buildings of impressively substantial construction (Figure 12), not unlike some at Tepe Madraseh. The walls of sun-dried brick, from six to nine feet thick, were originally covered with thin layers of white plaster or with carved plaster. One room with carved plaster had been domed, and another, which had later been divided, had outline paintings in black of a horseman (*Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, April, 1942, figs. 45, 46).

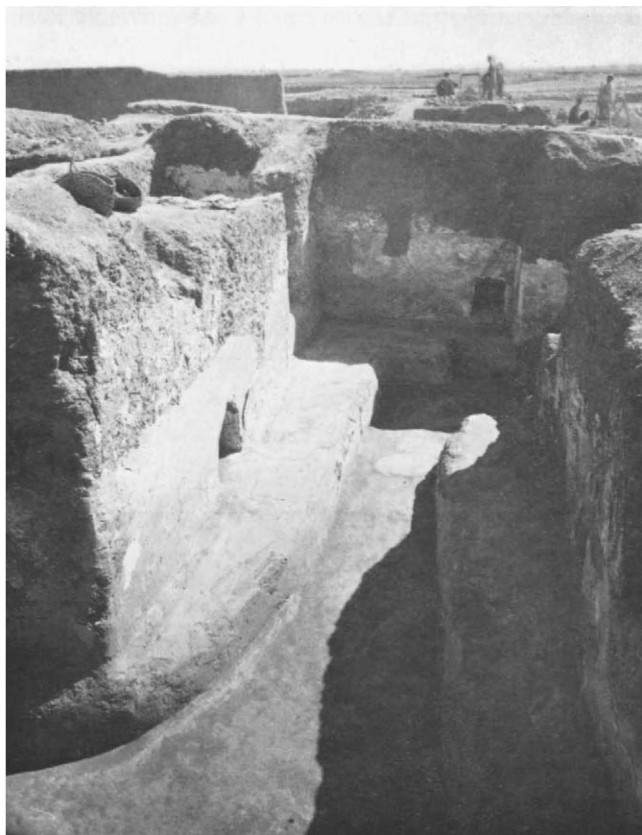


FIGURE 12 The alley excavated at Vineyard Tepe.

The coins found there were few: six of the second half of the eighth century or slightly later, one of the first half of the ninth century, and seven of the first half of the tenth century. It would appear that the buildings were

COINS FROM VINEYARD TEPE

2nd half 8th century	3
8th/9th century	3
1st half 9th century	1
1st half 10th century	7

contemporary with those of Sabz Pushan and the greater part of Tepe Madraseh and, like them, were no longer in use by the latter part of the twelfth century. There were definite signs of damage by earthquake, including a skeleton found beneath a collapsed wall and another found in a doorway, a favored place of refuge for Persians during quakes. It seems probable that these buildings were destroyed in the earthquake of 1145. Unglazed and lead-glazed pottery were found in this site. No alkaline-glazed pieces were found, in line with the closing date suggested above.

Kilns by Omar Khayyam: Not far from the Vineyard Tepe and close to the enclosing wall of the garden surrounding the tomb of Muhammad Mahruq and the tomb said to be that of Omar Khayyam the expedition found signs of ancient kilns. These consisted of fragments and wasters of alkaline-glazed ware, probably of the twelfth century and perhaps of the thirteenth. No excavations were made here. A few pieces picked up from the surface are designated either as coming from the kilns by Omar Khayyam or from the vicinity of Omar Khayyam. A sherd from the vicinity was probably brought to the site from elsewhere.

Bazaar Tepe: This site was named from the suggestion made by Sykes that a series of mounds forming a cross correspond to two lines of shops that lined streets crossing at right angles (Sykes, *The Geographical Journal*, XXXVII, p. 157). Although this suggestion is probably correct, no material evidence was found to confirm it. The expedition was able to clear only a small part of the upper level and to gain some entry to the lower levels by means of the wells and sinkaways. That there was an early period here was clear, in part from a deep hole presumably made by looters, in part from the character of the ceramic finds, and in part from recovered coins. These last consisted of four of the second half of the eighth century, one of the second half of the tenth century, and one of the Khwarizm-Shah Tekish (1172–99). No coins of later date were found.

COINS FROM BAZAAR TEPE

2nd half 8th century	4
2nd half 10th century	1
Tekish (late 12th century)	1

The bulk of the pottery found in the cleared upper level was obviously of a late period. Much of it was unglazed, including many sherds of molded ware. There was a greater proportion of this particular unglazed ware here than in any other site except the kiln areas by Tepe Ahangiran and Sabz Pushan.

Everything points to the Bazaar Tepe's having been abandoned in 1221 at latest—the time of the Mongol invasion. It may even have been abandoned earlier, after the destruction by the Ghuzz Turks in 1153.

Minor sondage: In the catalogue this identifies a few pieces of pottery of the eleventh and twelfth centuries

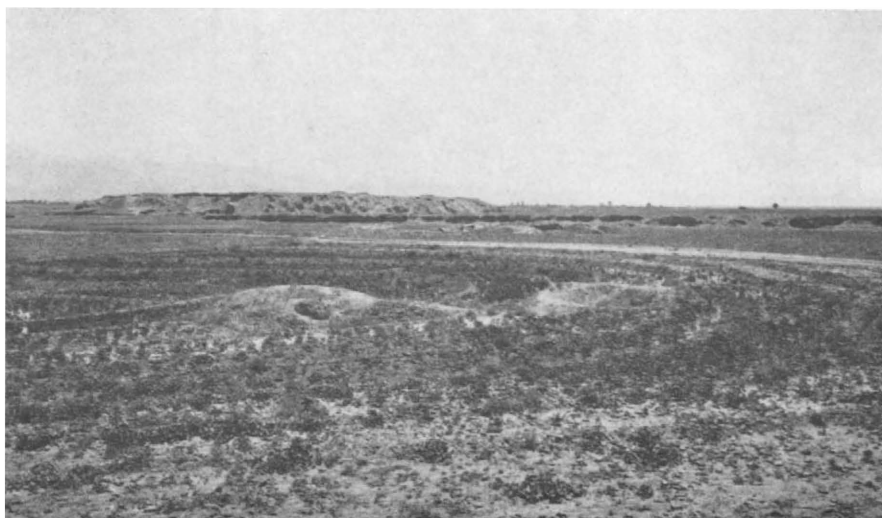


FIGURE 13

Tepe Alp Arslan before excavation.

found in the clearing of a very small protuberance between the East Kilns and the Bazaar Tepe. Little of interest was found here except for the pottery and some carved plaster cornices of the twelfth century.

Tepe Alp Arslan: Large-scale excavations were not possible here, but preliminary probings on this high mound (Figure 13) and on the apron to the south of it suggested that the mound was artificially made and not, like the lower mounds, an accumulation of the debris of centuries. Examination of the deep cuts made in the mound by the local peasants confirmed this. The lower mound, forming the apron, was evidently occupied in the early ninth century, but a pit dug down to virgin soil yielded no evidence that it was occupied in the Sasanian period or in the century following the Arab conquest. A

coin of the eighth or ninth century was found at the bottom level, and a Samanid coin (tenth century) was found at the top level. Neither in the high mound nor in the apron were any Sasanian pottery sherds found.

East Kilns: One of the most rewarding sondages was made in an area about a mile and a quarter east of the tomb of Muhammad Mahruq and about the same distance south of Tepe Alp Arslan. The nature of the site was obvious before excavation: the lower part of the dome of a kiln was visible, as were fragments of wasters, spurs, and other kiln material. In all, before the closing of the Museum's excavations, three kilns were excavated here. Further digging was evidently done here later, and as a result a few wasters reputedly and probably from this area are now in the Muzé Iran Bastan.

FIGURE 14

East Kilns. The firing chamber skirted by a wide ledge.





FIGURE 15 East Kilns. Ovoid firing hole.

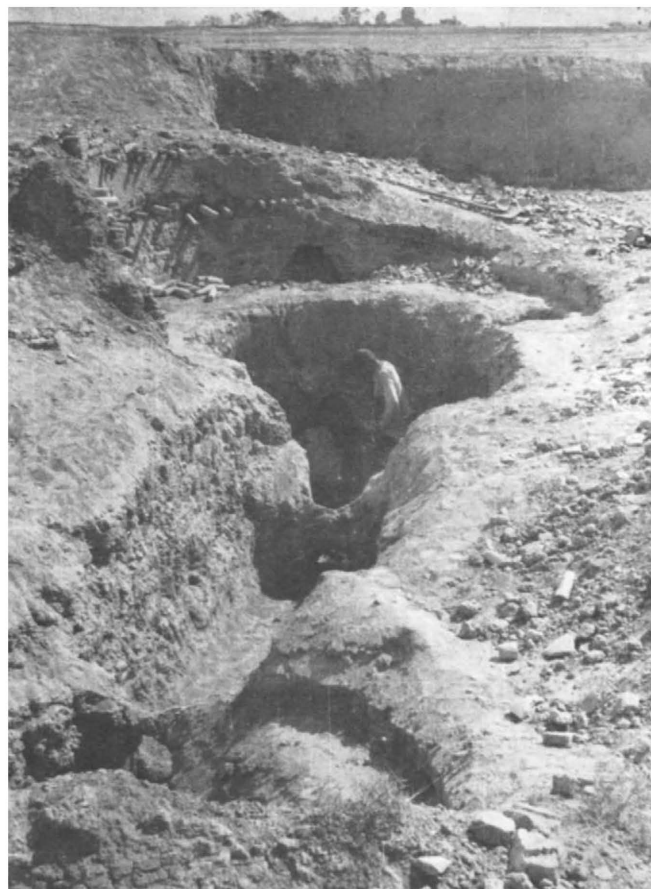


FIGURE 16 East Kilns. Passageway between firing holes in facing kilns.

FIGURE 17

East Kilns. The largest kiln (right) with three rings of baton holes in its wall.



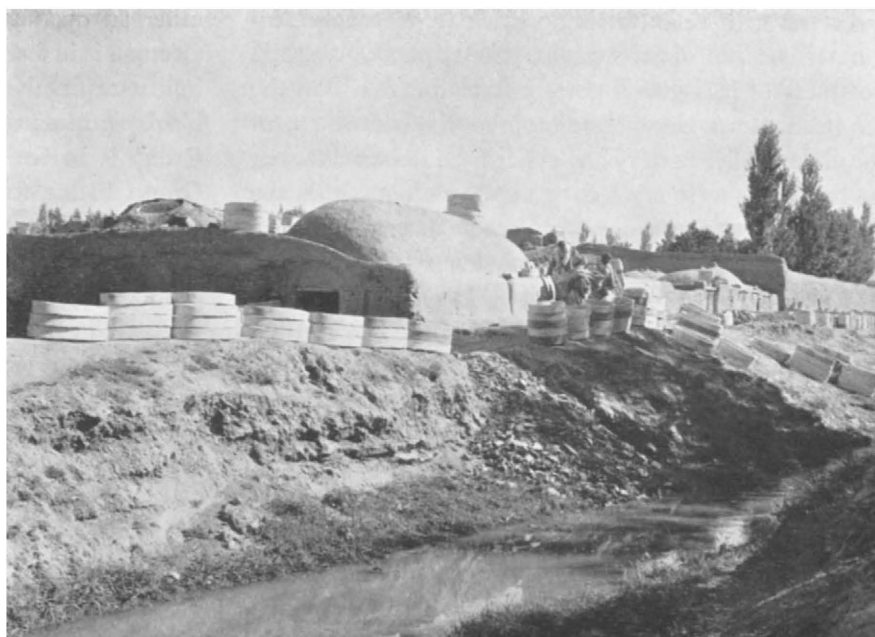


FIGURE 18

Modern kiln for producing the clay rings that line Nishapur's qanats.

Although the kilns excavated by the expedition were not all of the same size, they had several details in common. Each had a central circular pit—the firing chamber—with a wide ledge extending from its edge to the springing of the brick dome (Figure 14). Each kiln was fired through an ovoid hole (Figure 15), and two of the kilns had these holes facing each other at either end of a short trench (Figure 16). The three domes were too ruined to reveal how access was gained to stack and empty the kilns; however, the method of stacking within the kilns was clear. The wares were placed on tapered clay batons, the smaller ends of which were fitted into circular holes present in some of the bricks of the dome. In the smallest kiln there was one ring of these baton holes around the wall; in the largest kiln there were three rings (Figure 17). The domes of the kilns were circular. By contrast, the kilns that today produce the horse-collar-shaped rings that line Nishapur's qanats have elongated domes (Figure 18).

In the largest of the excavated kilns part of the floor of the firing chamber—the central pit—was raised to form a low platform. This and the rest of the floor were covered with ash and burnt waster fragments of alkaline-glazed ware. The kiln also had several well-like shafts that went down from the flat ledge directly below the springing of the dome. These apparently opened into the firing chamber at times; at other times they were closed off by patching (Figure 19). These shafts also descended below the floor level of the firing chamber; why this was so is not known. In these shafts, at a low level, were fragments of lead-glazed earthenware, including two wasters, one of black on white ware (Group 3, 88), the other of ware

FIGURE 19 The largest kiln, with a shaftway in its ledge. Above the lower opening is evidence of brick patching.



decorated with yellow-staining black (*Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, November, 1961, p. 113, fig. 20). No traces of lead-glazed pottery were found within the kiln itself. It was clear, therefore, that the kilns that produced the earlier pottery had either been destroyed when the later ones were erected, or they were not within the excavated area. The point could not be determined since it was not possible, because of time shortage, to dig down to virgin soil.

In one of the shafts descending from the ledge of the large kiln were found three silver coins: one of Mas'ud I, the Ghaznavid who ruled from 1031 to 1041, and two of the caliph al-Qasim (1031–74). These confirm that this kiln for the manufacture of alkaline-glazed ware was operating after the first quarter of the eleventh century. That none of the three kilns functioned after the Mongol destruction of Nishapur is clear, since no pottery of that time was found anywhere in the vicinity. In view of the site's considerable distance from the Nishapur that was rebuilt after 1221, its final abandonment is understandable.

The area of the East Kilns provided information that alkaline-glazed molded and pierced wares of high quality were manufactured in Nishapur, and that the city was not dependent on importations of the ware from Kashan except for luster.

Exact provenance unknown: Pieces so marked in the catalogue are those that were brought to the expedition by the workmen and other local peasants. All of them can without doubt be ascribed to Nishapur.

The Finds: Plan of Presentation

In all of the areas systematically excavated great quantities of glazed and unglazed earthenware were recovered—the enduring evidence of a human occupation that existed for a millennium. All these vessels, whether found whole or in fragments, had once been used in Nishapur, and most of them had been manufactured there. They are presented here in twelve groups. The lead-glazed wares appear first, with the three numerically most important groups first of all: the buff ware (so called from its prevailing color), a type of underglaze slip-painted ware; the color-splashed ware, a large and easily distinguished group with no slip-painting; and the black on white ware. The latter, like the buff ware, is a slip-painted ware covered with a transparent lead glaze. So, too, are the fourth and fifth groups, the polychrome on white ware and the ware with colored engobe, differing from the buff ware and the black on white ware most obviously in their color schemes. The sixth and seventh groups contain wares with opaque lead glazes, one an opaque white glaze, the

other an opaque yellow glaze. The ware discussed in Group 8 is in a sense classifiable as polychrome on white, but is distinctive in its inclusion of a yellow-staining black pigment; the ware bears a possible relationship to Group 6. In Group 9 are vessels of one color alone. In Group 10 are found the remains of imported Chinese pieces. Alkaline-glazed wares are presented as the last of the glazed groups; technically different from all the preceding, these wares were made only toward the end of the period covered in this study. Last of all, as Group 12, the unglazed wares are presented. This sequence of groups is not intended to imply a development in time, for generally speaking, with the exception of the late alkaline-glazed ware, the production of certain types of all these wares, in Nishapur and elsewhere, coexisted, at least in the tenth century.

In addition to its technical peculiarities, each of the groups has its particular decorative motifs. Pieces of ambiguous nature and uncertain classification will be found in the catalogue, particularly in Groups 4, 6, and 8, and in a few cases, generally where disintegration has caused partial loss of design or of color, a piece may have been placed in the wrong group; all such instances are noted in the accompanying text. In an even smaller number of cases a piece of one ware has been deliberately shown in another group, the purpose being to demonstrate the closeness of a relationship. These few exceptions aside, it may be said that the individuality of the designs is so marked that a full acquaintance with the pottery of Nishapur usually enables one to classify authentic examples of it from no more than a black-and-white photograph.

In many cases it is difficult to judge the origin of the pieces presented here—that is, whether they were made in Nishapur or not. Our knowledge concerning the extent of export and import in the eastern areas is still far from what it might be.

As noted earlier, the number of vessels found by the expedition, represented in the main by fragments, but including many complete and nearly complete pieces, was too great to warrant publication of the whole. Even the preservation of the whole was deemed unnecessary after enough material had been accumulated to give both museums a comprehensive collection of sherds for study purposes. Accordingly, a few of the pieces illustrated in this book were discarded in the field as being of secondary interest. Furthermore, some types of vessels that were found in quantity are represented in the halftone illustrations by only a single example. Although the ratio of common and rare pieces may thus mislead one in the illustrations, the catalogue comments will reveal the proper relationships.

The sequence within each group reflects at least two considerations: subgroups related in shape, technical fea-

tures, or decoration are shown together as much as possible, and all the vessels or sherds illustrated on any one page are reproduced at the same scale—a procedure deemed valuable even though it sometimes leads to somewhat arbitrary juxtapositions. What the sequence does not attempt to do is show a chronological order. Just as the twelve groups are generally contemporary, so the pieces within each group can be presented only generally. Precision of dating is simply not possible in this pottery. When a chronological sequence is clearly to be seen, as in some of the unglazed pottery, this is pointed out.

The Finds: General Comments

Just as Nishapur consisted of various suburbs, some undoubtedly contiguous, some others separated, so its population included diverse elements. The brief history given earlier shows that Nishapur was often under foreign domination, commencing in a major way, so far as this study is concerned, with the invasion of an Arab army, introducing Islam, in the seventh century. Subsequently Nishapur was dominated by Turks of various stocks, and, at the end of the period covered here, by the Mongols. At various times the governor of the city would be an Iranian serving Arab or other masters, or a Turk serving Turkish or other rulers. At all times the population was a mixed one, even without considering the many merchants who came and went, and it subscribed to various religions. The Muhammadans alone were divided into violently hostile sects. As noted earlier, there were Zoroastrians as well as Nestorian Christians here during the Sasanian period. The presence of Christians in the Islamic period is reflected in at least one of the wares presented in this book (Group 1, 71, 72). A bowl found after the close of the excavations, now in the Muzé Iran Bastan, reveals clearly that the Christians of Nishapur maintained close links with the church in Syria: it is adorned not only with crosses but with inscriptions in Syriac (Wilkinson in *Forschungen zur Kunst Asiens*, p. 82, fig. 4). That the Christians as well as the Muhammadans were affected by the introduction of the Arabic language is to be seen in the vessels decorated with such a word as *barakeh* (blessing), which is not restricted to any one religion. From historical sources we know that there were Jews in the city, but here our ceramic evidence is either nonexistent or inconclusive, resting wholly on the Hebrew-like aspect of the inscriptions on two glazed vessels of the twelfth century (Group 11, 21, 24). The presence of Muslims is of course abundantly clear in the recovered pottery. It is a remarkable fact that the inscriptions on the pottery found by the expedition are always in Arabic rather than Persian. This point is discussed by L. Volov (*Ars Orientalis*, VI, 1966, pp. 107–133). Despite the strong Iranian

renaissance in literature at this time, it is clear that in Nishapur none of this is revealed in epigraphical ceramic decoration. Not until the late twelfth century did Persian inscriptions appear, and none of these were found in the excavations.

Particular characteristics of personal appearance are bound to be of interest in any artistic representation of the human form; they are discussed in detail in the commentary on the individual pieces. Here it may be noted that, although the crudity of the drawing on both the glazed and unglazed wares limits the amount of information, the physical type repeatedly portrayed is entirely different from that seen in Seljuq, let alone Mongol, art. The foreheads of the Nishapur faces are broad, the cheeks almost cavernous, the jaws jutting. One sees no moon faces with full cheeks and narrow eyes such as are portrayed in Seljuq carved stucco and plaster (*Islamische Kunst: Ausstellung des Museums für Islamische Kunst*, Berlin, n.d., pls. 23, 24; Dimand, *Handbook*, fig. 55) and in luster and minai pottery of the late twelfth century (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pls. 52 B, 55 B; Grube, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, February, 1965, pp. 224, 225, figs. 30, 31) and early thirteenth century (Lane, op. cit., pls. 62, 63 A, 63 B, 72 A). Perhaps more surprising is the difference between the Nishapur faces and those that appear on contemporary pottery made elsewhere in the Islamic world, namely tenth-century luster ware (Pope, *Survey*, V, pls. 577, 579 A, B; *Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, p. 10, fig. 2).

Although the decoration of pottery may tell us only a little about the people who used it, the form of a vessel is directly related to its function. Even when elaborated, the underlying form is conditioned by its use. As a modern illustration, a soup plate is deep and requires the use of a spoon, so it differs in shape from a soup cup, from which one can either spoon the soup or drink it directly, usually with the assistance of a handle on either side of the cup.

In Nishapur, as generally throughout the lands of Islam, much food was eaten from small bowls and dishes into which the fingers of the right hand were dipped. Many of these vessels were made for communal use and are therefore of large size. The flat platter or plate of various sizes with shallow well and wide horizontal rim appears in Nishapur in wares of the ninth and tenth centuries but was not common. The particular function of this rim escapes us today, but it served in many instances as the place to inscribe a moral maxim or good wishes to the owner. Certain innovations in ceramic forms came in with the Arabs, other forms reflect older traditions. The deep vessel with an open top and a pipelike spout for pouring, so common in Sasanian times, dies out completely. Its place is taken by a deep bowl with an open

spout furnished with a strap across it, thus continuing the line of the rim to make a complete circle.

On the other hand, vessels specially made for the serving of nuts and sweetmeats during the long preliminaries to a major meal—an assembly of small bowls—reflect a custom going back to Sasanian times and continuing into the eighth century, as is proven by the excavations at Ramla (*Ramla Excavations*, see under glazed pottery, fig. 2).

Present evidence suggests that no glazed wares were made anywhere on the high plateau of Iran during the Sasanian period, although some glazed pieces were imported to this region—presumably from Mesopotamia (Iraq) and perhaps from the adjoining plain at the head of the Persian Gulf. None of the green blue-glazed wares found at Ctesiphon and Susa, which were certainly made in Iraq, and most probably at Susa, were found in Nishapur.

It is not possible to relate the pottery presented in this study to any made in Nishapur before the Abbasid period, for the simple reason that no pre-Abbasid pottery was found. Beginning with the Abbasid period, however, it will be seen that developments in Nishapur were not isolated from ceramic history elsewhere in the Islamic world. It may be noted that, a few fragments excepted, no glazed pottery was found in the fortress at Qasr-i-abu Nasr either, which was occupied, judging from coins of the Islamic period in Sasanian form, into the eighth century. This underscores the point being made: that the glazed production excavated at Nishapur is all of the ninth century and later. Because Nishapur, in the early days of Islam, was a military rather than a cultural center, it would seem that the city had little to do with initiating the manufacture of glazed pottery on the main plateau of Iran in the Islamic period. The indications are that there was great influence from Iraq, where the caliphate was seated, from the middle of the eighth century. During this time, and throughout the ninth century, Iraq was in closer touch with Nishapur than was the case later. There were also influences from Transoxiana and probably from other parts of Khurasan, but these came to full flower in the late ninth and especially the tenth century. Subsequently there was a major ceramic regrouping as Nishapur became part of the great Seljuq empire and the techniques were introduced from the west of Nishapur rather than from the east. Baghdad, insofar as ceramic influences were concerned, had by that time dropped out of the picture entirely. During the time of the great Seljuqs in the eleventh century there were still ties with Transoxiana in the lead-glazed wares, but with the introduction of alkaline-glazed wares Iran became a great center of design on its own, with Nishapur in the running very briefly, then dropping out for the two cities of Rayy and Kashan—of

which only the former could claim even a slight political importance.

Further information in regard to styles and influences will be found in the introductory chapters of the various groups into which the wares have been divided.

The photographs of all the pieces indicated as being in the Muzé Iran Bastan (referred to in the catalogue as the Teheran museum, or MIB) and the majority of those now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA) were taken in the field by the author. The restored material and some other pieces in the Metropolitan were photographed by the late Edward Milla. The color photographs were made by William F. Pons. Most illustrations of the pottery were laid out by Jean Leonard and the late Walter Hauser, who undertook the exacting task of ensuring that all the figures on one plate were in the same scale. The drawings of shapes, profiles, sections, and design motifs are the work of the present writer, with the exception of some by Walter Hauser.

In view of the resemblances among certain Nishapur pieces and those discovered at Afrasiyab (Samarkand), I reproduce in the Appendix a group of photographs taken early in this century, which records a large collection of Afrasiyab vessels while it was still in the storeroom of the excavator, M. V. Stoliarov. In the period between the two world wars Ernst Cohn-Wiener visited Uzbekistan and made photographs of pottery there. These photographs, owned by the Metropolitan, are also reproduced in the Appendix to show some of the differences between the decoration of vessels made in Afrasiyab and Tashkent.

Sincere thanks are given to G. A. Pugachenkova for her valuable help to me as I compared the pottery of Nishapur with that of Merv and Afrasiyab, by sending me publications on excavations in those areas and by answering particular questions in regard to such relationships. Thanks are also due Leon Wilson for his invaluable help in organizing and editing this book in such a way that a task was made a pleasure. The finishing touches to his work were assiduously made by Jean Crocker and Polly Cone. The members of the Islamic Department at the Metropolitan cheerfully answered innumerable questions, and its chairman, Richard Ettinghausen, graciously gave me the run of the storeroom and helped in every possible way. In London the late Arthur Lane, and R. J. Charleston of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and Basil Gray and Ralph Pinder-Wilson of The British Museum allowed me to examine the sherds in their care and helpfully discussed various problems with me. In Berlin similar services were rendered by the late Kurt Erdmann, Johanna Zick, and Volkmar Enderlein. Finally, my gratitude goes to my wife, Irma, for having given untold hours of her patience and help to me and my Nishapur project.

Catalogue

1

Buff Ware

Generally having a buff body and decoration painted in black, yellow, and green, followed by the application of a lead glaze, this ware constituted, numerically, one of the largest groups found. Until it was discovered in Nishapur in 1935, similar ware had not come to light elsewhere. One exception to this statement may be made. Among the thousands of pottery fragments from Afrasiyab in the Islamisches Museum, Berlin, known as a group since the early 1900s, there are three pieces of buff ware. These had remained unnoticed until recently, when Dr. Enderlein of the Islamisches Museum examined them. All three have designs of the type called, in the present publication, inanimate. One is in poor condition, its design almost obliterated. The two in better condition were probably imported from Nishapur, for, although they are not exactly like any examples excavated in Nishapur in the 1930s, they are not markedly different. None of these pieces is a waster.

After the termination of the Museum's field work, buff ware was found at other sites. In 1947 the late Mehdi Bahrani of the University of Teheran showed me buff fragments that had come, he said, from Gurgan, that much-robbed site northwest of Nishapur. Bahrani's material, other than some alkaline-glazed ware, has not been published, but his assertion was corroborated in 1963 by means of a collection of sherds picked up from the surface at Gurgan by Vaughn E. Crawford of the Metropolitan Museum. The stylistic evidence of these sherds is that most of the vessels were imported from Nishapur. More recently, in 1967/68, many fragments of the ware were found at Qumis, between Semnan and Shahrud, to the west of Nishapur; the decoration of most of them is of the later inanimate type represented in the Nishapur group by 41–46.

In the late 1950s buff ware was found at Merv, northeast of Nishapur, by an expedition of the Soviet Republic of South Turkmenistan (Masson, *Trudy*, II, p. 51, fig. 43; Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 249, fig. 17). The Merv buff ware, retrieved from the tenth-century level, differs in style from that of Nishapur but is closely related to it. In contrast to the picture at Gurgan, it appears that some of the

buff pottery found at Merv was made there. Contrary to the case in Nishapur, the Parthian and Sasanian sites at Merv were discovered and excavated. Whether Nishapur paralleled Merv in the manufacture of this earlier pottery we do not know. A two-handled pottery vase found at Merv, dated to the late fifth or sixth century, decorated with seated male and female figures (Pugachenkova, *Art of Turkmenistan*, fig. 67), is closer in style to Sasanian metal pieces rather than—as one might expect—to the later Merv and Nishapur buff ware. However, this vase suggests that the animate buff ware of Khurasan was, if not a continuation, at least a rebirth of a tradition already there. In any case, it is clear that the ware originated in Khurasan and that it owed nothing, at least in its initial stages, to Iraq or to the other Islamic countries of the west—or to any ceramic centers of China.

In its decorative use of birds, animals, and human beings the buff ware is not unique, for such elements appeared in contemporary luster ware, both of Iraq and Egypt. The style of the buff ware is its own, however, even though it may be possible to see in various details relationships to the styles of other works of art and to the products of other ceramic centers. The nonrepresentational forms that appear in the later buff ware form part of a widespread fashion in Islamic pottery in that they have a kind of vermicular pattern as a background to the main elements of the design—a fashion that extended from Syria and Egypt to Transoxiana and that survived the change from lead-glazed ware to alkaline-glazed ware (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pls. 57B, 77B).

With Nishapur as the chief place of production, the buff ware seems to have been made not before the ninth century, and its manufacture, so far as can be determined, died out in the eleventh century.

Here it becomes necessary to speak of the buff ware pieces that have appeared plentifully in the antiquities market in the period since 1940. Some of these come from unknown or uncertifiable sources; some have been represented as coming from Nishapur. The attribution is undoubtedly correct in some cases; in others it is not. A number of these vessels were seen in the large exhibition

Seven Thousand Years of Iranian Art that opened in Paris in 1961 and afterward, on a reduced scale, visited a number of European and American cities. It will be noticed that some of the "Nishapur" buff ware pieces now in public and private collections differ markedly in color and style from the group presented in the following pages. The fact that not even fragments like these pieces were discovered by the Metropolitan's expedition indicates that another source has been tapped. This is probably not far from Nishapur: perhaps Baihaq (present-day Sabzewar) or Jovain. It is possible, of course, though unlikely, that a few of the untypical "Nishapur" examples were actually found there, since it is a common experience that exceptional pieces continue to appear during excavations, even late in the operation. However, they usually do so in lessening numbers. Finally, it may be remarked that some of the pieces "found" since 1940 and attributed to Nishapur are forgeries.

In Nishapur the ware was made in every degree of quality from well-turned and elaborately decorated pieces to crudely painted kitchen utensils. Whatever the workmanship, the typical color of body and surface is buff. Sometimes the color of the surface is light enough to be described as bone colored, in which case an engobe is probably present as a ground for the painted decoration. When the surface is darker, more truly buff, the decoration is usually painted directly on the water-smoothed surface. The basic design is painted in a pigment that fires to a near black. Because of the presence of manganese, this black often has a purple cast. Sometimes it is a purplish brown. The colors most often added are yellow and green. The yellow, usually intense, is the color of English mustard. Sometimes it has a green tinge. Because it contains tin oxide, it is opaque, and as the blobs of this color are applied freely, not to say carelessly, they often overlap and obscure the black lines. The green, derived from a copper base, is transparent when thinly applied. It becomes almost black when much copper is present, at which stage it also obscures the painted design. This partial obscuration, softening the strongly drawn outlines, is not always unpleasing. Incidentally, the same green is used in the color-splashed ware of Nishapur. The two yellows used in the color-splashed ware, on the other hand, are unlike the buff ware yellow. A third color, a brick red slip, is used occasionally, always in a minor role.

The glaze, which has a high content of lead, often has a green tinge. It covers the inside and the outside of the bowls and dishes and in many examples the base as well. The glaze rarely flakes off, probably for the reason that there is usually no engobe beneath it, or, if there is an engobe, it is applied thinly. (By contrast, in the black on white ware, with its thick engobe, the flaking of the glaze is frequent.) When the glaze has eroded—often the case—

the black drawing and the blobs of yellow remain in such fresh condition it is hard to believe that glaze ever covered them. Such pieces may suggest that they were fired twice, once for the decoration and again for the glaze, but in fact, like all the other glazed earthenwares of Nishapur, they were fired only once. Unlike the yellow, which contains much clay and remains as an impasto on the surface, the copper base of the green fuses with the glaze, and when the glaze disappears, the green disappears with it, usually leaving a telltale gray area on the surface.

The decoration ordinarily covers the entire inside surface of a bowl or dish, in contrast to the treatment in certain other Nishapur wares (the black on white and the opaque white, for example), in which the decoration is limited and selectively placed. This is interesting in that it proves two fundamentally different styles were popular in Nishapur at the same time.

The decoration of the buff ware falls into two main categories, one without animate forms, and one in which bird, animal, and human figures appear. The differentiation extends to the subsidiary decoration, that filling the spaces of the inanimate designs usually consisting of cross-hatchings, checkerings, and the like, and that filling the spaces of the animate designs consisting of rosettes, dotted circles, and various intricate small patterns. Generally it may be said that the backgrounds of the animate pieces are more complex than those of the inanimate. The line between the inanimate and animate designs cannot in all cases be firmly drawn. Still, considering the great variety of the designs and the large number of vessels excavated, the hybrid pieces are surprisingly few.

Most of the vessels of the inanimate group, obviously made to sell cheaply, are of cruder manufacture than the animate. Strongly potted and of practical shape, they have thick, steep, slightly convex walls and heavy bases, either flat or slightly concave. The rims generally continue the line of the wall; only exceptionally do they extend laterally (35, 40). The decoration on the exterior is simple and remarkably standardized, usually consisting either of a series of claw-shaped strokes of pigment (3) or a series of vertical strokes contained in V-shapes (36). These two decorations, peculiar to the inanimate group, are not found on any other wares made in Nishapur.

Unlike the exterior decorations, the treatment of the interiors ranges from simple to complex. Inasmuch as pieces with simple design and elaborate design were found together, it is clear that simplicity of itself does not indicate an earlier date but simply a less ambitious piece.

The inanimate designs are drawn boldly in black outlines with colors added to fill some of the spaces (Color Plate 1, Frontispiece). The background areas in many cases are filled with crosshatching. One of the commonest of the simple designs consists of line-bordered "rays" is-

suings from the center of the bottom. Some of the rays are painted yellow, others are tinted green or left uncolored. Extra radial lines are often painted in. Sometimes these are broken by groups of dots (3). Occasionally the lines are wavy (4). In a few instances a wavy line is twined around a straight one (14). Another simple decoration consists of interwoven bands, colored yellow and green, crossing at right angles (8).

The design of a large number of the inanimate bowls is divided into four sectors. These are often bounded by straplike bands that may form a cross at the center (5) or may be interrupted there by a square (2) or a rosette (15). A fourfold repetition filling a circular space is characteristic of Iranian pottery decoration. It can be considered a fundamental design—one that, once introduced, never dies out. It is common, for example, on bowls of the fourth millennium B.C. made in Susa (Herzfeld, *Iran in the Ancient East*, p. 49, fig. 84). It is also to be seen on early button seals of Susa (Mecquenem & Contenau, *Archéologie*, p. 11, fig. 6, no. 1). The basic quadrantal design is found in the much later Sasanian period, after Iran had shaken off most of her Greek influence; it occurs, for example, on the cloak of Anahita in the sculptures at Taq-i-Bustan (Herzfeld, *Iran in the Ancient East*, p. 339, fig. 421). The quadrantal treatment was also used in the early Abbasid period by the potters of Iraq (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 11B). The treatment of the radiating bands in the Nishapur bowls contrasts with what is found in the twelfth-century pottery of Kish (near Babylon), in which the bands radiate from eccentric points (Reitlinger, *Ars Islamica*, II, p. 214, fig. 16B); in Nishapur the bands either cross a central point (5) or are lateral to it (6).

In the Nishapur buff ware the quadrants of the plainer bowls are often filled with crosshatching, the squares of which are filled with blobs of color and groups of three or four dots (5). Occasionally the hatching is triple, without added color (14, 18), a decoration not found in any other Nishapur pottery. Checkering is another treatment found in the four-sectored designs (2, 32). The quadrants are frequently edged at the rim with a sawtooth (5, 6, 15, 24), a decoration that is common in other wares of Nishapur, notably the black on white and the ware decorated with yellow-staining black. An infrequent substitution for the band of sawtooth is a pseudo inscription in debased Kufic (16). Inscriptions and pseudo inscriptions in more developed forms also occur in the buff ware, particularly in the animate group, but at best they are of less importance here than in other wares, particularly the black on white. For this reason extended comment on the subject of inscriptions as pottery decorations will be found in the introduction to that ware (pp. 92–93).

Not always content with such simple designs as have been described, the Nishapur potters in many buff ware

bowls introduced rosettes, palmettes, and half-palmettes, usually within the scheme of four basic sectors. In such bowls the spaces between the straplike bands may be filled with leafy forms (20); when the bands curve, the forms may be enclosed within the curves (25). The introduction of curving, interwoven, looped bands results in less formal arrangements of the basic design. In a few cases the bands form a figure eight (29, 30). In many others a decorative motif is contained within, or grows out of, interlooping bands—for example, a rosette (27) or a palmette (30). In still others, on two opposite sides of the interior, a large area, contrasting strongly with the rest of the decoration, is filled with hatching containing blobs of color and groups of dots (28). This treatment is an elaboration of simple checkering, an ancient method of decorating a bowl, to be seen in a piece of the fourth millennium B.C. from Susa, in which two opposed areas are so decorated (Mecquenem & Contenau, *Archéologie*, pl. v, no. 3). In a large number of the Nishapur vessels the decoration is arranged neither in sectors nor in diametrically opposed areas; instead, concentric rings are filled with circular ornaments and single leaves (26), or with palmettes and other leafy forms growing from interwoven bands (39). The circular area on the bottom is generally filled either with lines of pseudo inscription (26, 40) or crosshatching (39).

In only a few cases did the potters restrict their ornament and allow comparatively large areas of unadorned buff surface to show. This seems to occur most often when the center of the bowl is decorated with a hexagon or a pentagon (35–37).

The vessels discussed thus far are typically rather deep with slightly convex sides. There is another group with inanimate designs in which the shape is distinctly different. The vessel is shallower, the walls flare out more, and the rim sometimes stands up almost vertically (44–46) or, contrariwise, is almost flat (42, 43). Coupled with the change in shape is a change in decoration. In the shallower bowls one finds widely curving bands in yellow or green, strongly outlined in black, that meet in the center. Some of the bands are angled. Some have a half-palmette sprouting from one side (41); others, without the half-palmette, have a foliated or bent-over top (42, 43). In these designs the typical background filler is not crosshatching but either a combination of peacock eyes and dots or a combination of curling S-lines or figure eights and thick V- or U-shaped strokes that somewhat resemble leaves. Generally these two kinds of filler occur on the same bowl (30, 34, 41–44, 46). The peacock eyes and dots, appearing in areas bounded by fine outlines, occur in other Nishapur wares: the polychrome on white, the slip-painted ware with colored engobe, the opaque white, and the ware decorated with yellow-staining black. They are

also to be seen in slip-painted wares of Afrasiyab (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 18B) and other centers (Hobson, *Islamic Pottery*, fig. 36). Undoubtedly this decoration was borrowed from the west, since it is characteristic of Abbasid luster ware of Iraq (Kühnel, *Ars Islamica*, I, p. 148, figs. 2, 6). The second of these decorations, the combination of S-lines or figure eights and leaflike strokes, is perhaps an eastern version of the dotted S-curves so common as the exterior decoration of Abbasid monochrome luster bowls (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 13B). Despite this resemblance, the motif, as it appears on the buff ware, can be identified as having been drawn in Nishapur.

The second of the two principal groups of the buff ware—that with animate decoration—includes vessels decorated with birds, beasts, and human beings, singly or in combinations. The figures are presented as the principal feature of the design, with supplementary ornaments, never absent, filling the spaces around them. In general, as opposed to the orderly repetitions in the inanimate group, the placing of the decoration in the animate group may be said to be improvisational, even haphazard. The exceptions occur in bowls having decorative elements repeated in concentric circles around a central medallion (63, 73, 75, among others).

The animate vessels, which vary greatly in size and shape, include bowls, dishes (a few of which are provided with feet), and pitchers. Most are more carefully potted than comparable pieces in the inanimate group, although none is as thinly turned as, for comparison's sake, the best of the black on white ware or the polychrome on white. The color scheme differs from that of the inanimate group only in that it generally includes more yellow and that the surface of the bowl may be lighter in tone. The same transparent green is applied. In a few instances reddish slip painting is added sparingly (see Color Plate 2, page xiii).

When the buff ware first became known to collectors, the animate pieces, with their bold, unrealistic style, aroused particular interest. For the archeologist and art historian the images on these vessels have an attraction in that, aside from several Nishapur wall paintings that feature human figures, they offer practically the only possibility of our knowing what the people who once inhabited Nishapur looked like. From this point of view it is unfortunate that artistic license and clumsiness of draftsmanship obscure much of the information. As will be discovered in the notes on the individual pieces, the potters were frequently indifferent to, or perhaps confused by, such matters as details of dress and ways of wearing hair, and in some cases the viewer of today cannot even be certain of the figure's sex. It happens that, apart from one ambiguous figure (59), only male representations were found on the buff ware excavated by the Museum. This limitation to one sex is merely due to the accident of sur-

vival, since it is now certain from pieces subsequently found that females were also represented. An excellent example can be seen on a bowl in the Freer Gallery, Washington, D.C. (*Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, fig. 5). The features of the two women closely resemble those of a woman to be seen on a fragment found in Merv (Masson, *Trudy*, II, p. 51, fig. 43), and these, in turn, have a close relationship with female heads in the wall paintings of Samarra. This relationship must not, however, be interpreted as showing that the wall paintings influenced the ceramics of Khurasan. It is far more likely that the style is from a tradition that persisted in Khurasan and Transoxiana. There is some evidence for thinking this, thanks to the discovery in Merv of a vase of the fifth or sixth century decorated with a scene in which both a man and a woman appear (Pugachenkova, *Art of Turkmenistan*, fig. 67.)

In their own way, the animals and birds that appear on the Nishapur buff ware are as bizarre as the human figures they sometimes accompany. The horses, seen both with and without riders, are made into local backgrounds for floral ornament, the cheetahlike creatures that appear above them may have wings, birdlike beaks, or leaflike tails. The long-horned quadrupeds that appear on so many of the bowls may be intended as ibex or as gazelles, yet their ridiculously spindly legs may indicate that they are neither, for such legs suggest neither the sturdiness of the mountain-climbing ibex nor the fleetness of the gazelle. As an example of the Nishapur artist's indifference to nature—assuming that this is simply indifference—the heads of these animals are drawn in the same way as those of the birds, any differentiation being confined to the addition of ears, horns, or crests as the case may be. Another singular fact is that the animals and birds are for the most part represented as of the same size, making the birds appear gigantic, or vice versa (for further comment on this point, see 62).

Turning to the birds themselves, some of them, in view of their elaborate crests and pear-shaped tails, may be intended as peacocks. Peacocks figured commonly in Sasanian art, and in Nishapur of the ninth and tenth centuries this bird may have been regarded, as it was elsewhere, as a Christian symbol of immortality. It is certain not only that Christians then dwelt in Nishapur but that some of the buff ware (48, 49) was made either for them or by them. On the other hand, it is unsafe to count too heavily on what was in the potter's mind. His wide deviations from nature in the painting of these birds, as in the rest of his animate subjects, make it possible that he was representing doves or pigeons rather than peacocks.

The numerous small motifs that fill the spaces around the animate figures are discussed in some detail in the notes on the individual pieces. Here it is sufficient to point

out that a number of them occur in the decoration of other Nishapur wares and to draw attention to the potter's practice of linking two or more seemingly unrelated ornaments, often at abrupt angles (59, 62, 72). Such linkages of small motifs, unknown in the other wares of Nishapur, continue a tradition from Central Asian painting. Furthermore, it is remarkable that the same spirit of decoration, even to superficial resemblances, exists in this Islamic pottery of the Abbasid period and Greek (Rhodian) pottery of the sixth century B.C.—the more so in that there is an almost total lack of continuity between these distant periods. Among the motifs found in each (A. Fairbanks, *Catalogue of Greek and Etruscan Vases*, Cambridge, Mass., 1928, I, pl. xxvi, no. 290) are leaflike forms arranged to form a cross, looped lozengelike figures in groups of four, triangular forms attached to confining

edges, and rosettes of dots. The rosette of dots, incidentally, is also a common motif in the Nishapur ware with slip painting on a colored engobe (Group 5).

The exteriors of the animate bowls as a rule are more elaborately decorated than those of the inanimate, but here, too, certain motifs recur: closed brackets, lines of herringbone, lozenges, triangles, and pear shapes. Just as the very simple adornments of the inanimate bowls contrast sharply with the designs on the interior, the more complex but regularly repeating exterior patterns of the animate bowls contrast with the sometimes chaotic designs within. Most of the exterior patterns on the animate vessels, it may be noted, are not to be found on the other wares made in Nishapur or, indeed, on wares made anywhere else.

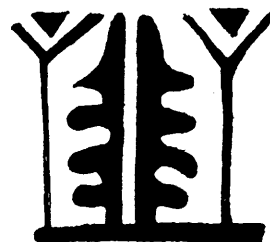
1 BOWL (restored)

D 17, H 7.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.82

In the group of vessels without human figures, animals, or birds in their decoration, this shape, with incurving rim and small diameter at the bottom as compared to the height, is unusual. The ground of the decoration is cross-hatched. The pattern at the rim, an undulating stem bearing trilobed leaves, also occurs in the animate group (63). The pattern around the wall, two wavelike bands enclosing palmettes, is a simpler version of that on 39. The motif on the bottom, filling the quadrants of a cross whose arms are not equal in width, is composed either of four segments defining a lozenge with incurved sides, containing a circular center, or a circle containing a curve-sided lozenge, the segments being merely the local background. The nature of the motif changes, that is, according to which part of it is considered dominant. It seems to be one of the most persistent ornamental patterns ever devised. For example, it appears as a geometrical exercise on a cuneiform tablet of the early second millennium (about 1800 B.C.), accompanied by these remarks: "A square, the side is 1. Inside it [are] 4 quadrants, [and] 16 boat-shapes. I have drawn 5 regular concave-sided tetragons. This area, what is it?" (H. W. F. Saggs, *The Greatness That Was Babylon*, London, 1962, pl. 24, drawing, p. 453). The motif was known in the Parthian period, seen in a stucco decoration (Herzfeld, *Iran in the Ancient East*, pl. xcix), occurs in the pattern of a mosaic floor in the fifth-century synagogue at Sardis (*Archaeology*, 19, January, 1966, fig. on p. 275), is found in the Sasanian period forming a decorative band on a bronze ewer (Sarre, *Die Kunst des Alten Persien*, pl. 127, left), and appears in the Islamic period in an eighth-century wall painting as the ornament on a girl's skirt (Hamilton, *Khirbat al Mafjar*, p. 234,

fig. 178). After a long persistence in textiles of Transoxiana, it appears on a robe worn by Muzzafar-uddin, the Emir of Bukhara (1860–85) (G. Wheeler, *The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*, London, 1964, fig. 12). Painted serially, the motif appears as a rim decoration on other vessels in the inanimate group (26, 36, 57). Used individually, the motif occurs in the animate ware in subsidiary decoration on a fragment in the Metropolitan (40.170.432), not illustrated here, and as a large decorative form upon a horse on a bowl, probably from Nishapur, in the Abegg Stiftung, Bern.

The decoration on the exterior of 1 consists of two motifs alternating: a group of two vertical strokes with horizontal lobes, vaguely suggesting Kufic script, and an inverted triangle placed above a V-topped vertical line.



Green and yellow have been added in the spaces. This decoration, more elaborate than customary, would be more at home on the exterior of an animate bowl. No other bowl like 1 was found. Due to erosion, it is almost devoid of glaze. Probably not earlier than the tenth century.

2 BOWL

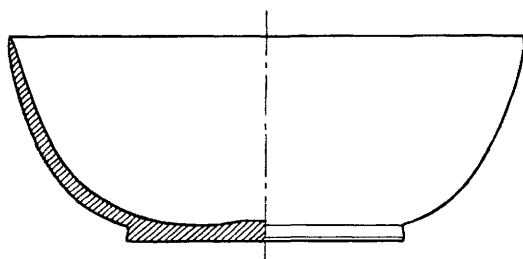
D 23.4, H 8.3 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Heavily potted. The starkness of the design, with its strong purplish black outlines and bold checkering on a crosshatched ground, is typical of such heavy bowls. The interlocked bands are yellow, the spots within their loops green. Green, too, are the four straplike bands that divide the design into quarters. The line on the rim is purplish black. Many of the inanimate bowls have such a rim line. The exterior is decorated at the rim with claw-shaped strokes of purplish black, as seen on the exterior of 3. Late ninth or early tenth century.

3 BOWL

D 20, H 8.25 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

An example of a simple radial decoration found on many bowls in the lower levels, datable to the ninth century. The V's that contain center lines are without color; those that do not have a center line are alternately yellow and green. The same design was painted on bowls and dishes of about half this size. The triangular groups of three dots on the wall are a frequent detail in the inanimate group (compare 13, 15). They are also common in the animate group, both in the decoration of leafy forms and as an addition at the ears and tails of animals. The claw-shaped strokes of pigment seen on the exterior at the rim are one of the two typical decorations found on these thick, heavy, deep bowls, the other being V-shapes filled with vertical strokes (20). Most of these bowls, including 3, have a flat



1:3

base. Occasionally the base is slightly concave; in even fewer cases it has a deep circular groove, as does an example decorated like 3 in the Metropolitan (40.170.21).

4 BOWL

D 20, H 8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.24

A common type produced in the ninth century. Poorly made, with flat base, decorated with wavy lines rather than the straight lines of 3. The dark-toned bands are green;

the rest are without color. There is no yellow on this bowl. Similar bowls were found built into a ninth-century wall of sun-dried bricks in Tepe Madraseh and in low-level pits and wells. Some have the claw-shaped strokes of pigment seen on the exterior of 3; others (like 4) are undecorated on the exterior. For a somewhat better-made piece found in Corinth, an import there, see C. H. Morgan II, *The Byzantine Pottery*, Cambridge, Mass., 1942, fig. 148B.

5 BOWL

D 20, H 8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

The design is divided into quadrants by straplike bands with notched outlines, colored green (the darker bands) and yellow (the lighter). Each quadrant is treated almost as if it were a flower petal, with a crosshatched heart shape added at the inner corner. The space above this shape is filled with a larger crosshatching, the alternate squares of which are filled with dots, the rest touched with yellow or green. At the rim, interrupted by the bands, a purplish black sawtooth.

The dot-filled crosshatching, not peculiar to Nishapur, was widely used in the ninth century, both on ceramics and glass. It occurs on a number of the inanimate bowls (6, 16, 24, 28, 34) and as part of the exterior decoration on an animate bowl (91). The sawtooth rim border, confined to sectors in the buff ware (6, 15, 24), is frequently seen in the black on white ware and the ware decorated with yellow-staining black, in both of which it often appears as a continuous line.

For variations in the design of 5, see 6, where the differences are slight, and 16, where they are considerable. In still another variation, not illustrated, the quadrants are divided by lanceolate shapes similar to those of 16 but banded like the "pinecones" of 17. The exterior of 5 is adorned with claw-shaped strokes of pigment (compare 3).

6 BOWL

D 21, H 8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

In this common variant of 5, the straplike bands do not cross at the center but instead give the impression of being interwoven. The effect is enhanced by the counterchange of the yellow and green with which they are colored.

7 BOWL

D 19, H 8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.31

A decoration of wide composite bands forming a cross on a crosshatched ground, the drawing in purplish black. Centered in each band, and crossing at right angles in the

center, are outlined straplike bands, one green, one yellow. Flanking these bands, chevron fashion, are shorter outlined bands of green and yellow. Wavy lines, also in chevron fashion, appear between the colored bands. The squares of the crosshatching have been given a short stroke at the intersection. The result is less than a true triple hatch, such as can be seen on 14 and others. This quasi-triple hatch, seemingly peculiar to this ninth-century Nishapur pottery, is to be seen on another and more elaborately decorated bowl, found after 1940 (Jakobsen, *Islamische Keramik* Exhibition Catalogue, pl. 2). The exterior of 7 is decorated at the rim with claw-shaped strokes of pigment. Found with this bowl, in a location indicating a ninth-century dating, was an opaque white ware dish with overglaze decoration in blue (Group 6, 1).

8 BOWL

D 19.6, H 7.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.102

Flat base. Exterior decorated at rim with claw-shaped strokes of purplish black. Interior: wide interweaving bands, alternately striped and colored green or yellow. Many bowls or fragments of this type were found. In some the bands in two opposed quadrants are replaced with checkering. Although the design apparently died out in Nishapur by the tenth century, another version of it is to be seen in the twelfth-century glazed pottery of Corinth (C. H. Morgan II, *The Byzantine Pottery*, Cambridge, Mass., 1942, pl. xxiii, b).

9 DISH (restored)

D 10, H 4.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.170

Plain flat base, typical of such small dishes (see also 10, 11). Exterior undecorated. Decoration on interior: a wide crosshatch with diagonal lines drawn through the squares in alternate rows.

10 DISH

D 11.5, H 4.8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.201

Plain flat base. Exterior undecorated. Interior: broad crossbands drawn in purplish black, two colored yellow, two touched with green, with an uncolored square at the center. Curved lines enclosing the bands produce a flowerlike effect. For more developed versions of this idea, see 12 and 38.

11 DISH (some restoration)

D 13.4, H 5.3 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.97

Plain flat base. Exterior undecorated. Interior: a cross of four lanceolate forms, two of which are green, two yellow. The quadrants are filled with cusped shapes, left uncolored.

12 BOWL

D 15.4, H 5.6 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Four straplike bands colored green, with a dab of yellow placed in the square at their intersection. Lotuslike petals fill the quadrants, with the center petal in each group streaked with yellow. The exterior is decorated at the rim with claw-shaped strokes of pigment in the manner of 3. For a similar treatment of a flowerlike decoration, see 10; for a more complex treatment, see 38.

13 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 13.5 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Instead of bands, crosshatched lanceolate forms define the quadrants. These are filled with three-petaled flower forms. The colors of the petals, yellow and green, are counterchanged; the center petal of one group is yellow, that of the next, green. Each petal contains a median stroke of black. From either side at the tip the center petals sprout a horizontal "leaf." The triangle of three dots added beneath each leaf is a feature frequently encountered, as mentioned at 3.

14 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 21, H 7.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Greenish glaze. Design divided by bands into eight sectors. In each band a combination of a straight and a zigzag line gives the effect of one twisted around the other (see also 16). The spaces between the bands are filled with triple hatching. The eightfold repetition of a dominant motif (see also 17) is comparatively rare in Nishapur pottery, perhaps because it was felt to be monotonous. The motif of the entwined line was also used in wall decorations in Nishapur; an example was found in a ninth-century wall painting in Tepe Madraseh.

15 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 16.8 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Most of the preceding bowls have bands that cross at the center; here the circular form of the bowl is emphasized by the presence of a double ring around the bottom.

Within it is a rosette formed of long, pointed petals alternating with rounded petals. The pointed petals are decorated with a median line, the rounded petals with a triangle of three dots. For a similar rosette in a double ring, see 24. A related example in the Metropolitan (40.170.428) shows a variation, with heart shapes between the pointed petals. On the wall of 15, bands define areas that contain, alternately, a notched budlike form with its tip at the rim and a triple-hatched conical form with its tip touching the center ring. Lengths of sawtooth (see 5 for comment) appear on the rim above the conical forms. Parts of another bowl were found, in a ninth-century location, on which similar budlike forms broke into the rosette on the bottom.

16 BOWL FRAGMENT

D 19.5, H 8 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.122

On the bottom, a square outlined with a band containing a combination of a straight and a zigzag line. A similar combination of lines occurs on 14. The square contains a petaled form in reserve. A crosshatched lanceolate form extends up the wall from each corner of the square. The intervening triangular areas are filled with the dotted and color-dabbed crosshatching seen previously (5, 6). The sawtooth rim decoration of 15 is replaced here with a debased form of Kufic writing, painted in reserve. The exterior is decorated with the usual claw-shaped strokes of pigment. Base slightly concave.

17 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 16.5 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
Discarded

Radial bands extending to the rim divide the design into eight sectors (comment on this at 14). Each sector contains a suspended "pinecone," crosshatched and ornamented with a horizontal bar. Above each pinecone is a length of horizontal band colored green.

18 BOWL

D 19.5, H 7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

The usual quadrantal design, effected with unusually wide bands. These have notched outlines and contain ladderlike divisions. Alternating in the divisions are a pointed crosshatched biconvex form and a lozenge, its circular center blobbled with color. The quadrants, outlined by green bands, are triple hatched (compare 14).

19 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 16.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
Discarded

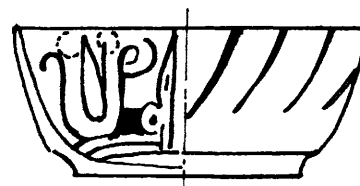
Four straplike bands, colored green, meet at the center. Trilobate forms (seen complete on 20 and 21) flank the bands. In the intervening spaces, on a crosshatched ground, are trefoils on stalks, an unusual motif in Nishapur ceramics but one that may have been used in rugs for centuries, since it appears in nineteenth-century Turkoman rugs from the Amou-Darya region in Uzbekistan (Chepelev, *Iskusstvo*, 1, fig. on p. 56).

20 a,b BOWL

D 25, H 10.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.68
(Color Plate 1, Frontispiece)

Typical of buff ware bowls of the late ninth century with inanimate decoration, the design is divided into quarters by means of intersecting bands. The bands are flanked by trilobate forms (compare 19, 21). Growing from the inner corner of each crosshatched quadrant is a stem, ending in a trilobate leaf. The leaf, bent horizontally, supports a flowerlike form that rises to the rim. This form, which has a palmette at its center, is enclosed by a band whose foliated ends echo the treatment of the trilobate leaf. The motif of a palmette enclosed between two vertical stems or half-palmettes that develop horizontally at the top appears to have been widespread in the ninth century. It was already in use as an architectural decoration in the eighth century, occurring in carved stucco panels at Khirbat al Mafjar, Jordan (Hamilton, *Khirbat al Mafjar*, p. 224, fig. 173, p. 266, fig. 216b). Variations are to be seen on the beams of the mosque at Qairawan (Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, II, p. 223, pl. 50 d), at the top of a measuring column at Roda (ibid., pl. 82 g), in Samarra (E. E. Herzfeld, *Der Wandschmuck der Bauten von Samarra und Seine Ornamentik*, Berlin, 1923, pl. LXVII, orn. 190, fig. 170), and in a plaster decoration, perhaps of the late tenth century, in the church of El-'Adra in the Wadi 'N Natrun (H. G. Evelyn-White, *The Monasteries of the Wadi 'N Natrun*, New York, 1933, pl. LXVIII).

On 20, as on other bowls with related decoration (19, 21–23, 25), the potter adorned his foliate forms with single and double dots. The decoration on the exterior (20b) consists of V's filled with vertical strokes, one of the two common treatments of the inanimate buff ware (for the other, see 3). The base, slightly concave, is not glazed. From a ninth-century location. Related in style are some



very small bowls; the one shown came from a low-level plaster floor in Tepe Madraseh.

21 BOWL

D 19.5, H 7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Related in design to 20, and of the same date. The trilobate forms that flank the bands are here more leaflike, as well as better drawn and more prominent. The cross-hatched quadrants contain an attenuated diamond form that touches the rim between two tripartite forms. For mention of the single and double dots within the various forms, see 20. The exterior is decorated at the rim with claw-shaped strokes of pigment.

22 BOWL

D 20.3, H 7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

The division of the design into four parts is here effected by interwoven bands, left uncolored, that enclose a petaled device (visible at the top in the illustration) alternating with a half-leaf (barely visible at the sides). The divisions of the design are not equal in size, the areas containing the petaled device being larger than those with the half-leaf. Compare 29, both for the form of the half-leaf and for a similar inequality in the size of the "quarters." The touches of yellow on 22 are apparent in the illustration as the lightest tones; the green has vanished with the glaze. The exterior is decorated with groups of vertical strokes enclosed in V's. Ninth century. Closely resembling one another, 22 and 29 were probably drawn by the same hand.

23 BOWL

D 20.5, H 8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

The crossbands, with the central area colored green, lack the supplementary leaflike buttresses of 19–21. The quadrants contain a rather stiff leafy decoration, composed of two vertical stems, back to back, from which trilobate half-leaves and budlike forms grow. They are sprinkled with single and double dots (compare 19–22). The exterior has the usual claw-shaped strokes of pigment at the rim. From a low-level, ninth-century location.

24 BOWL

D 20.3, H 7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Appearing four times on the wall is a pear shape containing a crudely drawn leaflike form. The intervening spaces are filled with dotted and color-dabbed crosshatching, with lengths of sawtooth at the rim (see 5 for comment on

both crosshatching and sawtooth). The rosette and ring on the bottom are similar to those on 15. The exterior is undecorated. Ninth century. For another treatment of the pear-shaped motif in another ware, see Group 4, 22, where several variations are discussed.

25 BOWL

D 19.5, H 7.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.9

Curved interlacing bands occur on a number of bowls that were found in the lowest, or ninth-century, levels of Tepe Madraseh. The bands of 25, which are without added color, form four circles that are filled with a particularly vigorous vegetal form. This form and the rosette on the bottom—drawn around a cross with arms of equal width (compare 1)—are sprinkled with dots. Blobs of green and yellow have been applied in the circles, at the crossings of the bands, in the center of the bottom, and in the vegetal forms.

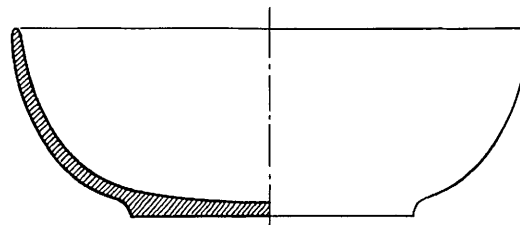
26 BOWL

D 20, H 7.3 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 38.40.299

A central medallion crossed by a band containing dotted circles in two groups of four separated by two singles. On either side of the band, a line of pseudo-Kufic writing, its base toward the center. Surrounding the central medallion, a band containing leaves alternately green and yellow. For comment on the ambiguous motif in the band nearer the rim, see 1. Here, because the segments surrounding the lozenges are strongly touched with yellow, the design appears to be a repeating group of four leaves or petals. Above this decoration, a green band and a yellow band. A black line on the rim. The exterior is decorated with V's filled with vertical strokes. Base, slightly concave. Ninth century. Poorly turned; in one place, pushed out by the potter's finger, the thinned wall is all but perforated. Having the same lozenge decoration at the rim, 36 and 57 may have come from the same pottery as 26.

27 BOWL (minor restoration)

D 20.3, H 7.6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 37.40.15



Bone-colored engobe. This design of curved interlacing bands appears to have been very popular. No particular form that they enclose here, contrary to the case in 25, is dominant. In another example so decorated the circle on the bottom was filled with checkering. The exterior of 27 is decorated with groups of vertical strokes in V's. The base is flat, with a very slight, narrow groove near the center. Ninth century.

28 BOWL

D 19.2, H 8 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

A combination of curved interlacing bands in the manner of 27 and two large areas of dotted and color-dabbed cross-hatching in the manner of 5. Same exterior decoration as 27. Ninth century.

29 BOWL

D 20.3, H 8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.106

The interlacing bands, which have not been colored, here form two prominent cone-shaped areas and two circular areas, the first filled with half-leaves, the second with four-petaled rosettes. The decorative lines added in the rosettes are almost obliterated by the opacity of the yellow pigment and the density of the locally green-stained glaze. As on several of the preceding bowls, dots in ones, twos, and threes have been inserted in the leafy forms. Ninth century. Closely related to 22 and probably drawn by the same hand. The exterior is decorated with V's filled with vertical strokes. The base is flat, with a narrow groove one centimeter in from the edge.

30 BOWL

D 20.3, H 7.9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.72

Curved bands, crossing at the center of the bowl, form a figure eight, each loop enclosing a palmette. The bands and the half-leaves they give off are colored yellow. The palmettes are surrounded by a curling line and dot motif, the half-leaves by outlined compartments containing peacock eyes and dots. Green dots appear in the half-leaves, palmettes, peacock eyes, and irregularly elsewhere. The figure-eight design is commoner on shallower, more flaring bowls than this. So too are the peacock eyes and the line and dot motif around the palmettes (compare 34, 41–44, 46). The curling line and dot motif does not seem to have been introduced before the end of the tenth century. It appears on some of the sherds from Afrasiyab in the vessels with a white engobe and decoration in black and red. Along with the peacock-eye motif it reveals links with the yellow and brown imitation luster ware of Nishapur (Group 6, 49–51). Peacock eyes also appear in the polychrome on white and the yellow-staining black wares of Nishapur (Groups 4 and 8).

The rim decoration of 30 consists of a dotted circle attached to a stem, alternating with a dotted semicircle. For variations of this design, see 44, 45. The exterior of 30 is decorated with vertical strokes in V's. Base, flat, with a narrow groove. Probably tenth century.

31 BOWL

D 25.9, H 9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Of larger than usual size. Decoration features a strict division into quarters by means of straplike bands, with curved interweaving bands in the crosshatched quadrants. The subsidiary decoration consists of oval, leafy, and four-petaled flower forms. Exterior: the usual strokes in V's. A related bowl was found with triple-hatched ground.

32 BOWL FRAGMENT

D 22 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Decoration consists of two checkered compartments (one missing) alternating with two circular medallions filled with vertical lines, the spaces between the lines colored alternately yellow and green. The somewhat heraldic appearance of the checkering is fortuitous, caused by the shieldlike shape it fills. This shape is flanked by the same trilobate forms seen on 19 and 20. Above the "shield" is a lozenge form comparable to that in the bands of 18. The ground is crosshatched in the usual manner.

33 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 22 cm ; Village Tepe
Discarded

An example showing elaborately interwoven bands, with checkering, leaf and flower forms, and crosshatching. The vertical leafy forms seen within one of the circles may have been intended as the finials of a pseudo inscription.

34 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 20.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.463

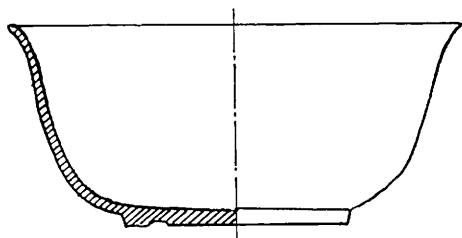
Part of a large vessel with incurved rim and concave base. Splashes of glaze appear on the base. Bone-colored engobe. Design divided by curving bands into eight units: four large inverted cone shapes alternating with four smaller ones. The larger shapes contain an inverted five- or possibly seven-leaved palmette surrounded by a repeated unit consisting of a circular stem enclosing small leaflike forms arranged as V's with a spot added at the top

(compare 30). This particular motif appears in identical form on a bowl found at Zamakhshar, near Tashauze in Transoxiana, and assigned to the twelfth to fourteenth century (Voyevodsky, *Bulletin of the American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology*, V, p. 243, fig. 12d). Probably twelfth century. A bowl from Afrasiyab is illustrated by Tashkhodzhaev (*Artistic Glazed Ceramics of Samarkand*, pl. 5, bottom right) and is related to this kind of Nishapur ware, although it is without the V-motif. The design consists basically of a cross formed of cones, with their points touching at the center, that are filled with a form of crosshatching more heavily outlined than is customary in Nishapur. The four spaces between these cones are filled with foliate forms against a black background, reminiscent of Nishapur buff ware. A border not unlike that of 63 completes the design. Some resemblance to the motif surrounding the palmettes on 34 can be seen in a glazed pottery bowl from Afghanistan, dated by Gardin to the twelfth century (Gardin, *Ars Orientalis*, II, p. 241, fig. 6, no. 68). This type of ware has more recently been discovered at Qumis, and it would seem that it was not introduced until the eleventh century anywhere. In a busier, more confused, small-blobbed form, the motif appears on twelfth-century luster pieces of Iran (Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 637 A) and Rayy (*Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, fig. 21), and on eleventh-century luster ware from Egypt (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 23A). A related form, in which circling stems are supplemented by spots and thick curls rather than by heavy V-shapes, is to be seen in the twelfth-century underglaze-painted, blue-glazed ware of Raqqa, Syria (*Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, fig. 20; Hobson, *Islamic Pottery*, fig. 26), including a bowl in the Metropolitan (56.185.6) (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 77B). It even appears in Nishapur itself in underglaze-painted, blue-glazed ware (Group 11, 16, 17, 23).

The smaller cone shapes of 34 as well as the encircled bottom are filled with the decorative crosshatching seen on 5 and other vessels. The small irregular areas between the cone shapes are filled with dots, a treatment also to be seen in the polychrome on white ware and the ware decorated with yellow-staining black.

35 a,b BOWL

D 18, H 7.3 cm ; Tepe Madrasedh
MMA 40.170.1



1:3

An unusual shape, the rim sharply everted. With this projection it is not surprising that there is no decoration

on the exterior wall. The base has a deep groove, an uncommon feature in the inanimate buff ware. The glaze has disappeared except here and there on the black lines. The yellow and green have disappeared as well. Although poorly drawn, the decoration is interesting for its hexagon, an unusual form in Nishapur pottery. Within the hexagon two superimposed squares form a Solomon's seal with a circular device in the center. A stock decoration in Islamic art (for its appearance in another Nishapur ware see Group 6, 1), the Solomon's seal goes back to Sasanian times, occurring in stucco decoration from Ummez Za'tir at Ctesiphon.

36 a,b BOWL

D 18.5, H 8.5 cm ; Tepe Madrasedh
MIB

Another vessel with a central hexagon (compare 35). Within the hexagon is a spiral ending in a floriation, a conventional design employed in the ninth century in arts other than pottery. It occurs, for example, in one of the squares in the tympanum below the first dome in the Great Mosque at Susa in Tunis (Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, II, p. 252, fig. 200C). Pairs of dots and single dots, found on many buff ware bowls, appear in the central decoration of 36. A wide blank space occurs between the hexagon and the rim decoration; unfilled areas such as this, common in other Nishapur wares, are rare in the buff ware. For discussion of the rim decoration, see 1. Portions of the drawing ran when the piece was fired (inverted). The double curve of the silhouette (36b) is unusual in the buff ware; for its occurrence in another ware, see Group 5, 19. The exterior of 36 is decorated with the usual groups of vertical strokes within V's. The base is without a groove. Perhaps made in the same factory as 26 and 57.

37 BOWL

D 20.6, H 8.5 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.272

Drawing in purplish black on a ground that has an unusual mauve tinge, probably due to an accidental admixture of a little manganese in the glaze. The main element in the design, contained in a central circle, is a pentagon with irregularly curved sides. Within it, on a crosshatched ground, is a short stem from which grows a trilobed leaf with excrescences. The spaces between the pentagon and its enclosing circle are filled with half-palmettes. Scattered in the spaces and in the central leafy forms are the single dots and groups of dots seen on so many buff ware bowls. The space between the center design and the rim decoration is rather sparsely filled with two motifs alternating: a rosette in a circle of crosshatching, and two half-leaves extending horizontally with their short curved stems merging. The indentations of one leaf point up, those of the

other down. This motif, on a smaller scale, occurs on one of the animate bowls, 60. It does not occur in the other wares of Nishapur but was found in almost identical form among some sketches on a plastered wall in the Vineyard Tepe, painted in black on the white surface (Hauser & Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, April, 1942, p. 119, fig. 46). A similar half-leaf motif is to be seen on a tenth-century monochrome luster bowl (Pézar, *Céramique*, pl. cxiv). The rim decoration of 37 consists of circles in reserve in a black band, colored yellow and green alternately. The decoration on the exterior consists of vertical strokes within V's. Base slightly concave. Location indicates ninth century. Location of the plaster wall mentioned above indicates the same date.

38 BOWL

D 20, H 8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
Discarded

The design resembles an open flower (compare 10, 12). Based on simple crosslines, the four principal "petals" are formed of wavy lines and curved lines. The single hatching within them is unusual in the buff ware. The triangular secondary "petals," which were drawn after the primary ones (the lines overlap here and there), have double outlines and contain two pairs of short horizontal strokes separated by a vertical stroke. The background is crosshatched. The flower effect is enhanced by a circular spot of yellow placed upon the intersection of the crosslines. The exterior is without decoration.

39 BOWL FRAGMENT

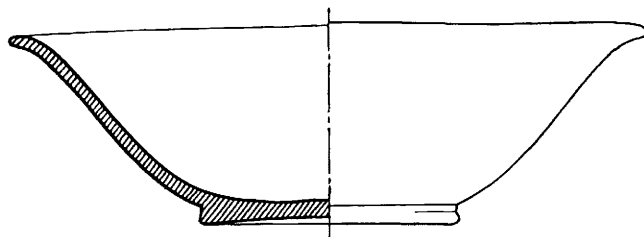
W 26.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Plain base, slightly concave. Decoration on the wall: interwoven bands, from which grow five-lobed palmettes, the usual crosshatched ground. On the bottom: the decorated crosshatch seen on previous pieces (5, 6, 16, 24, 34), with the difference that the added dots are in threes. The light-toned spots in the illustration represent the mustard yellow blobs that were added to the original drawing in black before the glaze was applied. The glaze has entirely disintegrated, exceptionally, taking the yellow with it.

40 BOWL

D 25.5, H 8.1 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

In a central medallion, three lines of Kufic inscription, one of which, relative to the others, is upside down. All three would appear to be an adaptation of the Arabic word *barakkeh* (blessing). The connection of the letter *re* with the succeeding letter, as here, is common in Nishapur pottery inscriptions, even though, properly, the letter should not be so joined. One of the *kafs* (top line in the illustration) has



1:3

been written reversed, as in a mirror. From a band encircling the center, eight leafy forms curl upward in S-shapes. These alternate with a pointed biconvex form. The ground of the decoration is crosshatched, and the familiar dots appear in the leafy forms, the band, and the inscriptions. The flat rim has an unusual decoration: a series of shallow V's. These were probably once colored yellow and green alternately. The glaze is entirely eroded.

41 a,b BOWL

D 24.5, H 10.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.97

Reddish body. Upturned lip. Slightly concave base, unglazed, upon which is a large bead of yellowish green, the result of dripping from above when the piece was fired bottom up. The principal components of the design, V's made of curving radial bands, appear four times, twice colored green, twice yellow. Four of the bands give off a leafy form on one side, the tip of which rises to a circumscribing circle just below the rim. The compartments are filled either with dots and peacock eyes or with spots and a chain of thin S-lines (compare 30). The exterior (41b) is decorated with vertical strokes in V's, alternating with groups of three strong black strokes, an unusual feature.

42 BOWL

D 26, H 7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Plain base, slightly concave. Exterior undecorated. Although the components of the interior decoration are like those of 41, the reduction to a threefold repetition is unusual. V-shapes are introduced among the curling stems that fill the lanceolate forms. Forms closely related to these are to be seen on pottery, dated to the twelfth century, made at Bamiyan (Gardin, *Ars Orientalis*, II, pl. 6, no. 68) and Zamakhshar (Voyevodsky, *Bulletin of the American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology*, V, p. 243, fig. 12d). A black line circles 42 at the beginning of its strongly everted lip, and another black line (not visible in the illustration) appears on the rim itself. A variation of the tripartite decoration was found on a bowl whose rim was not everted but sharply upturned.

43 BOWL

D 24.3, H 7.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.99

The components of the design, similar to those of 41 and 42, appear in a less regular division. Two of the dividing bands are plain and two are half-leaves, one growing out of the other. The glaze has disintegrated, taking with it most of the green (traces remain in the peacock eyes). The yellow is still present, showing in the illustration as the lightest tones. The lip is everted. The exterior is undecorated. Plain base, slightly concave.

44 BOWL

D 18, H 7.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.4

Plain base, slightly concave. Representative (as is also 46) of a number of bowls of this size in which the decoration of curving bands and various leafy forms is generally more loosely drawn than it is on larger bowls such as 41–43. The sharply upturned rim is characteristic. The inner wall is decorated at the rim with a series of triangles and semicircles, some of which contain added strokes. The exterior is decorated at the rim with a series of strokes, alternately yellow and green, enclosed in curved brackets; this decoration appears on bowls of the animate group. Buff ware bowls of this shape are not earlier than the late tenth century.

45 BOWL

D 18.3, H 7 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

The decoration is sparser than usual, and the motifs are all quite simple. Four biconvex forms with green centers rise from the bottom. Between them are circles filled with parallel lines touched with spots of green and yellow. The division of the decoration into four repeating parts, characteristic of earlier, deeper bowls, persists in this shallower type. The sharply upturned rim is decorated with circles touched with yellow alternating with semicircles touched with green, the latter having an added vertical stroke at one side. A less common type of bowl than 44 and 46.

46 BOWL

D 18.5, H 6.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

The design is divided into contrasting shapes by means of yellow and green bands, some of which are straight, some curved. The more or less triangular shapes, twice outlined, are filled with spots and peacock eyes. The more or less lanceolate shapes are filled with curling lines, spots, and the V-shaped leaves that also figure in 42–44. The

sharply upturned rim is decorated with a chevron pattern, its lower triangles green, its upper, which contain smaller triangles, yellow. The location, close to the top level, suggests tenth century. For a variation of the chevron rim pattern, see exterior of 47.

47 a,b BOWL

D 21.2, H 9.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Flat, uneven base. An unusual piece, intermediate between the animate and inanimate groups. Although the delicacy of the potting, the extensive use of yellow in the central square and bands, and certain of the ornamental details point toward the animate group, no animal or human form is depicted. The chevron design on the exterior (47b) occurs in both groups: in a related form in the inanimate (46) and in a bowl (in a private collection) whose interior is decorated with a horseman. On the other hand, the little curls filling the triangular compartments of the interior design are rarely seen in any Nishapur pottery other than the monochrome ware with graffiato decoration (Group 9, 51) and the ware decorated with yellow-staining black (Group 8, 10). Such curls also appear in early eleventh-century Egyptian monochrome luster ware (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 23B). The design of 47 is based on a central square, its outline colored red. Within this is a six-petaled rosette, doubly outlined in a way characteristic of the animate ware (see 59). With a curious addition that gives it the appearance of an opening bud, the rosette is repeated on the walls within a pear shape colored green. Although the rosette with this addition appears to be unique, the addition itself, in conjunction with other motifs, is a feature of the animate group (72). On the exterior of 47 the band immediately below the chevron decoration is red. Tenth century.

48 DISH FRAGMENT

D 8.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.500

Part of a set of joined dishes that once rested on conical feet, used for sweetmeats. (For the form itself in another ware, and additional information concerning it, see Group 9, 38.) The cross in the center is typically Nestorian (see also 49). Although the cross in a simple form appears often in Islamic decoration (see 71, 72), the Nestorian cross is rare. That the present motif is truly a Christian one is confirmed by the discovery in Nishapur after 1940 of a bowl (now in the MIB) decorated with eight such crosses and an inscription in Syriac, the language of the Nestorian church, begging the mercy of God (Wilkinson in *Forschungen zur Kunst Asiens*, p. 82, fig. 4). For the appearance of a Christian cross in the unglazed ware of Nishapur, see Group 12, 200.

The vertical wall of 48 is decorated with a simulated

Kufic inscription, the presence of which with a Christian symbol is not inconsistent. The inscription is probably a debased version of the Arabic word *barakeh* (blessing); the tops of the letters point toward the bottom of the dish, and here and there small circles with a central dot and blob of green have been added. The same style of inscription occurs in the animate buff ware (64, 73, 78, 87, 91). The ground of the interior of 48 is painted yellow; otherwise the piece has been left buff under its glaze. The dish that once adjoined it had a different decoration on the interior: a series of joined curved brackets, each with a vertical stroke down the center. This motif is often seen on the exterior of vessels of the animate group. On the surviving junction of the dishes are parallel strokes of black, suggesting a binding together. Like 47, 48 represents an intermediate type between the two groups of buff ware. It was undoubtedly made by the potters who produced the animate rather than the inanimate ware.

49 INKWELL

D 7.7, H 5.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 38.40.296

Another piece intermediate between the inanimate and animate groups. The Nestorian cross (discussed at 48) appears on the vertical face of each round corner and again, smaller, on the top surface of each corner. Yellow is applied liberally on the buff ground. A marblelike ball of clay was found inside the piece: perhaps a device to stir the ink.

50 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 7.7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
Discarded

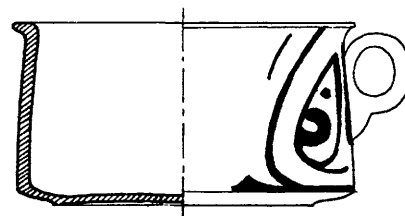
Unlike the preceding three pieces, definitely an example of the inanimate group. The decoration, consisting of lanceolate forms on a broadly hatched ground, bordered by a band of slanting lines, is unusual. The sharply everted rim is yellow; yellow and green blobs appear elsewhere. The outcurved rim and the broad line painted upon it suggest a relationship with 35. Found beneath a lowest-level plaster floor, thus clearly of the ninth century.

51 BOWL

D 11.2, H 5.4 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

A thinner-turned piece than usual in the inanimate group. The typical straplike bands are green; the square at their intersection is yellow. The area around each cluster of dotted circles is yellow. The decoration on the exterior consists of stripes, alternately yellow and green, containing slanting strokes in green.

In addition to these small bowls that easily could have been used for drinking, a handled cup was retrieved from

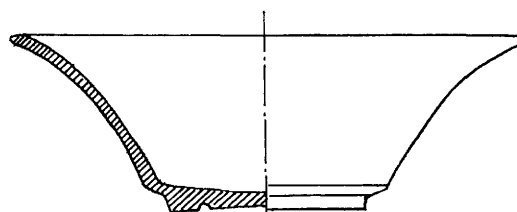


1:3

a low-level well in Tepe Madraseh, its interior irregularly splashed with yellow and green spots.

52 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 15 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.503



1:3

Bone-colored engobe. The base, which has a groove near the edge, is glazed. The wide flare of the sides is characteristic of the group of bowls with animate decoration (compare especially 74). The shape does not appear among the pieces published as excavated at Afrasiyab. The rim pattern consists of small double circles and leaves growing from curved stems. The rays painted on the wall are, in sequence, green, black, yellow, black, red, black. Judging by the remains, the decoration on the bottom, painted on a yellow ground, included a bird or two. The exterior is decorated with closed curved brackets in the manner of 87, without the intervening motif of slanting strokes. The base has a groove and bevel forming a foot ring. Several more bowls with such rays on their interior walls have been found since 1940; one in private possession has a bottom decorated with a horse, above which appears a small animal.

53 DISH

D 12.2, H 5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Another piece, like 47, having the qualities of both groups of buff ware. Characteristic of the inanimate group is the division of the design by means of straight lines crossing at the center, though here the sectors are an unusual six. The spiral curve seen at the inner corner of one of the sectors occurs in other bowls of the inanimate group. The chevron in the corner of the adjacent sector is found in both the inanimate and animate groups, in the first chiefly as a rim decoration, in the second chiefly as an adornment on the necks of birds and animals. A variation of this particular chevron is to be seen on the bottom of a

Nishapur buff ware bowl in the Metropolitan (40.170.692). The motif is also to be seen on tenth-century bowls of a similar ware found in Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 244, fig. 15). The enclosed palmette on the wall of 53 is a characteristic device in the animate group; for its use as a bird's tail, see 62. Unlike the chevron, which in the pottery of Nishapur is seen only in the buff ware, this palmette occurs in another ware, the polychrome on white (Group 4, 49). The decoration on the exterior of 53 is like that of 59, a bowl of the animate group.

54 JAR

D 5.9, H 7.3 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 39.40.19

Yellow is splashed on the background. Green appears on the broad circles within the purplish black rims of the rosettes. This crude piece may have served as a lamp, even though, generally speaking, lamps seem not to have been made in buff ware.

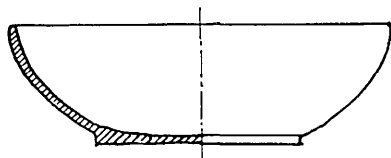
55 DISH

D 10.3, H 4 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

Flat base. Everted, flat lip, unusual in Nishapur pottery. One of several small dishes with a minimum of decoration, here consisting of radial lines with a short supplementary stroke in one sector and a blob of yellow or green in the next. The exterior is without decoration.

56 BOWL FRAGMENT (rim)

W 8.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
Discarded



1:3

An atypical piece. The cross, in reserve on black, is filled with spots, suggesting a connection with 19. The hatching, although it is finer, recalls that on 50. Found at a low, ninth-century level.

57 DISH FRAGMENT

W 10 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

For discussion of the rim decoration, see 1. Splashes of green and yellow have been added to the black outlines. Perhaps made in the same pottery as 26 and 36. Found with 50. Ninth century.

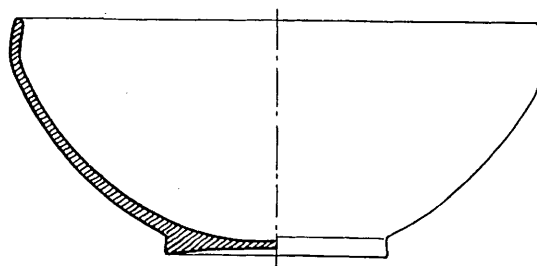
58 DISH FRAGMENT

W 8.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

The animate group of buff ware includes such small pieces as this, on which the bird has a petaled collar similar to that of the birds on 74. Its unusual crest, composed of two triangles, suggests a pheasant's spurs (compare 79). The ground is filled mainly with simulated Kufic, with chevrons in the spaces at the rim. Base slightly concave.

59 BOWL

D 30, H 9.2 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 38.40.290
(Color Plate 2, page xiii)



1:3

Bone-colored engobe. As in many of the vessels decorated with animate subjects, much of the ground is covered with yellow. The principal element of the design is a standing human figure, perhaps a young man. The sex of the figures on other such bowls is likewise uncertain. The wearing of a skirt does not eliminate the possibility that this is meant to be a male figure. For example, of the four heavily bearded figures on a buff ware bowl in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Wilkinson, *Iranian Ceramics*, pl. 26), two wear skirts. The beardless face of 59 is somewhat angular, the top of the head flat, the forehead extremely wide. The gauntness of this face and of others in the buff ware (62, 64-66, 68) is at variance with the life-size painting of a male head that once formed part of the decoration in a house in Sabz Pushan (Hauser, Upton & Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, November, 1938, p. 9, fig. 8). On the other hand, a female head from the same wall painting (*ibid.*, fig. 7) has the abnormally wide forehead of the buff ware figures. The eyes of the figure on 59 are placed close together. This closeness, typical of early Islamic representations of the human face, is common in the bone or ivory representations of human figures that have been found in Islamic sites from Egypt to Samarkand. The brows, strongly drawn, have what may have been intended as a tattoo spot between them. The space between the brows was, of course, a favorite one for decoration. An early example is to be seen on a gold pendant from Cyprus in the Metropolitan (74.51.3397; Oliver, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, May, 1966, p. 272, fig. 6); this is either an imported piece or it shows a strong

orientalizing influence. A number of faces in Sasanian metalwork, both male and female, have such marks (Shepherd, *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art*, April, 1964, p. 85, fig. 21). Variants of the mark seen here occur on buff ware bowls found since 1940. One, which undoubtedly comes from Nishapur, shows two seated women with a triangle of three dots between their brows (*Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, fig. 5). A face with a tattoo mark between the brows occurs also in the mold-made unglazed ware of Nishapur (Group 12, 179). The wings of the nose on 59 are indicated by two down-sloping lines, a very different treatment from that to be seen on other pieces, almost surely found in Nishapur since 1940, in which the nose ends in a trefoil (*Exposition d'art musulman Catalogue*, pl. II); the trefoil nose was also used by the makers of monochrome luster pottery of the tenth century (Pé-zard, *Céramique*, pl. CXIV). The mouth of the figure on 59, quite small, is drawn ambiguously: either it is meant to appear open or it has been outlined with no division between the lips. As a whole, the countenance offers a great contrast to the soft, heavy-cheeked, moonlike faces that appeared in Persian Seljuq art of the eleventh century and continued after the Mongol conquest.

The figure rests one hand on its hip. In the other it holds a tall ornamented goblet. The object was once thought to be a scimitar, but certain bowls with similar figures found since 1940—for example, one in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, decorated with a seated female figure—confirm that this is indeed a goblet and that its curved shape is simply the result of poor drawing.

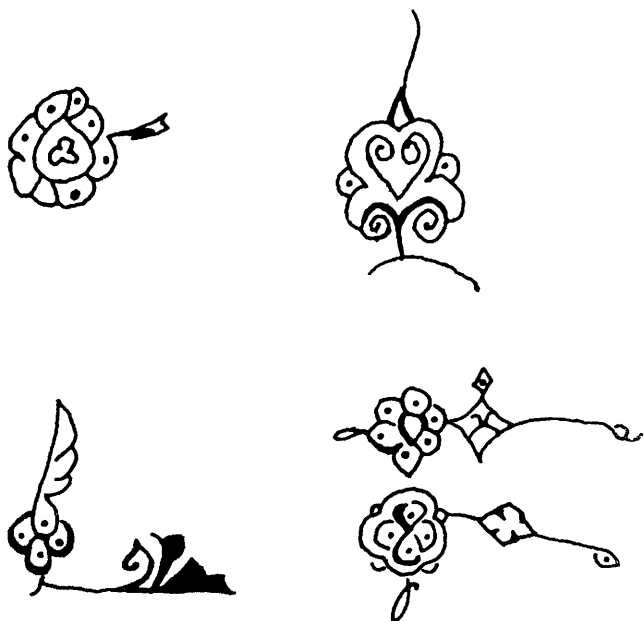
The figure's dress is of a type that was unknown in Islamic art until the discovery of this particular bowl, and thus far it has been duplicated only on other buff ware bowls from Nishapur. The upper part of the body is covered with a jacket that has a narrow collar and tight-fitting sleeves. The sleeves are deeply slit on one side, the edges bound. The edges of the jacket, also bound, overlap and have prominent lapels, each decorated with a group of three spots. Lapels of larger size, although not precisely of this shape, apparently originated in Central Asia, where they appear in paintings of the seventh to ninth centuries (A. Grünwedel, *Altbuddhistische Kultstätten in Chinesischturkistan*, Berlin, 1912, figs. 116, 334, 426). The lower part of the body is covered by a skirt or apron so drawn that it appears to be rolled at the top. The decoration of this garment consists of lozenges formed by intersecting lines. Each lozenge contains a smaller one divided into four and dotted. Silk cloth so decorated was made in China. The motif appears in a wall painting in Chotscho (Le Coq, *Chotscho*, pl. 40B) and in wall paintings in the palace of Idyqutshahri in Turfan (Grünwedel, *Altbuddhistische Kultstätten in Chinesischturkistan*, Berlin, 1912, fig. 665). These lozenges, contained within overlapping circles, appear in an eighth-century wall painting as the ornament on a girl's dress (Hamilton, *Khirbat al Maffjar*, p. 234, fig. 178). Such lozenges also occur on a silver bowl of the eighth century (Ghirshman, *Ars Orientalis*, II, pl. 4,

fig. 7), in wall paintings of the ninth century at Samarra, (Herzfeld, *Die Malereien von Samarra*, pl. xli), and on underglaze painted bowls found in Syria (Lane, *Archaeologia*, LXXXVII, pl. xix). Finally, in the buff ware itself, the lozenge device appears in the exterior decoration of 63 and 86. A broad band of green at the hem completes the decoration of the skirt on 59. Beneath the skirt long drawers appear, and below these, shoes, drawn in an unrealistic fashion with exaggerated heels and the rest of the foot narrow and pronglike. This form of shoe, which also occurs in representations of horsemen (62), is to be found on a tenth-century monochrome luster bowl from Rayy, showing a man wearing jackboots (Pé-zard, *Céramique*, pl. cxvii), and on a tenth-century monochrome luster bowl of Iraq (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 13A).

An extraordinary feature, seen only in the buff ware representations of human figures, is the scarf with bifurcated tails. This would seem, on 59, to be fastened in place with a cord or band, one end of which, halfway down the figure's right arm, is decorated with a cross in reserve. This motif is balanced on the other shoulder by a circular form, also with a cross in reserve, that appears to be a shoulder-length curl of the figure's hair. That hair was worn with a terminal curl at the shoulder is apparent on a luster painted bowl of the tenth century (Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 577). Other vessels confirm the intention of the Nishapur artist to portray something other than hair descending from the shoulders. This is particularly clear on one of the Nishapur vessels mentioned above in other connections, the bowl illustrated as plate II in the *Exposition d'art musulman Catalogue*, and also on a bowl in the City Art Museum, St. Louis, showing a definitely male figure, with a heavy black line indicating his beard. Wearing a skirt and bifurcated scarf, the figure stands with arms akimbo. His hair descends to his shoulders and ends in a curl on which a crosslike motif appears in reserve. A cross in reserve also appears on one tail of his scarf (Wilkinson in *Forschungen zur Kunst Asiens*, p. 84, fig. 7). On the other hand, an example of complete confusion between the hair and scarf is to be seen on the seated, heavily bearded figures on a Nishapur bowl cited earlier (Wilkinson, *Iranian Ceramics*, pl. 26). Here the line of the hair descends to the shoulder unbroken except by what might be considered an earring. The black hair, seemingly without a break, then joins the two tails that descend below the outstretched arms on either side. The other figures on this bowl, also bearded, have hair that ends in a curl at the nape of the neck, and they have no capes.

Flanking the figure are two large birds, remarkable for their upcurved beaks and long flowing crests. As is customary in the representation of birds and animals in the buff ware, their heads and necks are in reserve. The rest of the bowl's surface is filled with a scattering of small circles containing a dot, open hearts, palmettelike shapes, bracketlike shapes, and rosettes with double outlines. Such a rosette is also to be found in the inanimate group: 47, central motif. Several of these motifs are joined to-

gether, either in a straight line (the group above the goblet) or at a right angle (the group to the right of the figure's head). This linking of disparate motifs, as can be seen in the drawings, is found in Nishapur only in the animate group of the buff ware. However, the practice is



known elsewhere, for example, in Central Asia in the cave paintings of Bazalik, where flower and leaf forms, arbitrarily joined, are scattered on the background (A. Grünwedel, *Altbuddhistische Kultstätten in Chinesischturkistan*, Berlin, 1912, figs. 556, 561, 580; Le Coq, *Chotscho*, pls. 17, 26, 29). The motif placed between the foot of the goblet and the top of the bird's head is particularly reminiscent of such Central Asian forms.

A line of pseudo Kufic, roughly indicated, appears to the right of the figure. No sizable area of the surface is left undecorated, the usual style in the animate group. The decoration on the exterior consists of two motifs alternating: a circle containing a spot, and a group of three superimposed triangles with color in the spaces between them. The base, concave, is glazed. Tenth century.

Although this is the only complete bowl decorated with a single standing figure that was found by the Museum's expedition, 67 and 70 are doubtless the remains of related bowls. Several similar bowls are now known, undoubtedly from Nishapur and perhaps all from the same potter's shop. The bowl in the City Art Museum, St. Louis, already mentioned, was surely made by the same hand that made 59, for in addition to the general resemblance, the figures' noses end in the same distinctive way. On another of the bowls mentioned above (*Exposition d'art musulman* Catalogue, pl. II), the figure is posed like that of 59 but in its right hand holds what seems to be a fruit (a dark green spot obscures the drawing). On a related bowl in a

private collection the figure's head is in profile, and in its right hand, in the tips of its fingers, is a fruit, round at the bottom and pointed at the top, out of which grows an elaborate decoration. A vase, once in the Matossian collection, is decorated with four men wearing boots and leggings, sitting cross-legged. Their hair ends distinctly in large circular bunches decorated with six-petaled rosettes, and below this, on both sides of the arms, the bifurcated scarf shows clearly. Still another pose, in which a man stands with both hands upraised (compare 70), occurs on a bowl in Copenhagen (letter to author); on this the man has a crown above, not on, his head, and in each hand he holds a leafy stem. Much the same pose occurs on still another bowl in a private collection; here the man's upraised hands are empty and his index fingers point upward. In all of these bowls the significance of the figures remains uncertain. Something more may be intended in 59 than a representation of the simple act of drinking: perhaps a symbolic quaffing of wine, a ceremony with a long history among the pre-Islamic Turks, Scythians, and Islamic Turks (Esin, *Ars Orientalis*, V, p. 152, fig. 8; Iakubovski, *Paintings of Ancient Pendzhikent*, pl. x; Sarre, *Die Kunst des Alten Persien*, pl. 109).

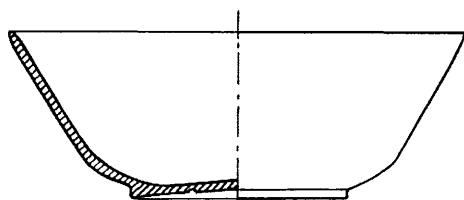
60 BOWL FRAGMENT

D 19 (approx.), H 6.6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

The glaze is eroded. The principal decoration, unique in the pottery of Nishapur, consists of four long-necked animal heads joined to make a swastikalike figure. The horns of two of the heads extend upward, forming pear shapes. The horns of the alternate heads ascend, curl downward, and point upward again as half-palmettes. The four necks are decorated with the chevronlike collars that occur on many of the animals and birds in this ware. The motif of animal heads joined together in a swastika is one that goes back to remote antiquity. It appears in Scythian art of about the fourth century B.C. (E. A. Minns, *Scythians and Greeks*, Cambridge, 1913, fig. 57). Clustered around the swastika on 60 are small birds, Kufic pseudo inscriptions, a variety of leaf forms, and small circles containing a dot. Some of these circles are grouped, others occur singly. Both forms are common in the animate group. The "inscriptions" are in two styles, both frequent in the animate group: a large outline form (on which comment is made at 63) and a smaller "lettering" on a base line. One of the subsidiary motifs is in the form of a spiral extending outward as two opposed half-leaves. For the use of a similar motif as a major decoration in the inanimate ware, see 37. The center of the lozenge is partly obscured by a blob of yellow. The exterior decoration of 60 consists of biconvex forms like those to be seen on 74.

61 BOWL

D 17.7, H 6.6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.87

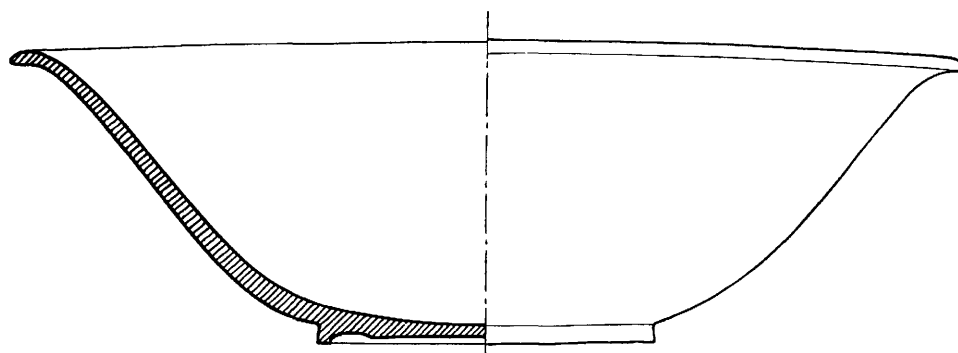


1:3

In poor condition, showing evidence of having been in a fire. However, the glaze has not spalled. The decoration features four horned animals, one standing on each side of a central square, an artistic conception that goes back many centuries in Iran. It is to be seen, for example, on the base of a gold bowl ascribed to the late second millennium B.C. found in Hasanlu (Dyson, *Archaeology*, 13, p. 124). Scattered over the background are plant forms with small circular flowers, the typical dotted circles in groups of four, small lines of chevrons (an unusual feature), and some pseudo Kufic. Yellow and green have been applied sparingly. The decoration on the exterior consists of vertical rows of herringbone alternating with a unit of two concentric lozenges. The inner lozenge is filled with green, the outer, yellow in every other unit. The base, which is glazed, is concave, with a groove semicircular in section, near the center.

62 a,b BOWL

D 38, H 11.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB



1:3

Reddish buff body, bone-colored surface. Base, slightly concave, has a groove forming a foot ring. Most of the interior surface is covered with yellow. The dominant feature is a man with drawn sword astride a horse, both portrayed in profile. The man has a flat-topped head and very wide forehead (compare 59). His eye is large. His brow is drawn with a thin single line that continues to the thick line that represents his beard and defines his jaw. Beneath his brow is a second line, a continuation of the eye

itself. This striking feature, a surely unrelated parallel to an ancient Egyptian fashion of eye decoration, seems to occur for the first time in Iranian art in this Nishapur buff ware. The bottom of the man's cheek is indicated by a curving line, a device that contributes to the characteristic gauntness of the Nishapur faces (compare 64, 66). His hair, which ends in a projecting roll well above his shoulders, is adorned with flowerets in reserve, touched with color. Since similar flowerets appear on the horse's hooves, they are probably simply a decorative convention, not a representation of actual blossoms. A row of four spiral curls crosses the man's forehead. Like the flowerets, these were probably added purely for decorative purposes, not in conformity with reality. But these details are only the beginning of the potter's artistic license. The horseman's shirt, decorated with small crosses, has one sleeve deeply slit, its edges bound, as on 59. The other sleeve, bound at the cuff but not slit, is decorated in a wholly different manner, with large spots. The collar of the shirt is drawn in such a fashion that it appears to be rolled. The breeches, adorned with a pattern of squares, disappear into a black legging ornamented with a half-palmette in reserve. There is no connection between the legging, which is perhaps made of leather, and the shoe; the separation is emphasized, in fact, by the presence of a reserve border around the legging (compare 64, 71). Leg gear of this type, which seems to be represented in Nishapur only in the tenth-century buff ware, calls to mind the high boots seen in a painting among the frescoes at Bazalik, Central Asia, in which they are worn by kneeling Tocharian merchants (Seyrig, *Syria*, XVIII, p. 12, pl. II, lower). There is a suggestion in this painting that a cord was sometimes used to suspend such a boot from the wearer's belt. Leggings go back to Sasanian times, as is

indicated by their appearance on a Sasanian bronze incense burner in the form of a horse and rider on which the legging is left plain and the foot is covered with spots (Pope, *Survey*, IV, pl. 240 A). The leggings also occur on a Sasanian silver plate (Smirnov, *Argentaria orientalis*, pl. CXXI, no. 306). The excessively slender shoe of 62 (compare 59) is of a type found in seventh- and eighth-century paintings of horsemen in Pendzhikent (M. Bussagli, *Painting of Central Asia*, Geneva, 1963, pp. 44, 45). The ring-

like stirrup of 62 is suspended from a strap; the space between this strap and the legging is filled with the same crosses that appear on the rider's shirt, but since this is simply a space, the treatment points to the artist's preoccupation with putting small decorations everywhere, without relation to reality. The horseman's straight-bladed sword, a type known in the Sasanian period, has a hilt that terminates at either end in a large V-shape. This type of hilt was in use among the people who in earlier centuries ranged from the heart of Asia to the plains of Hungary (Fettich, *Archaeologia Hungarica*, XV, pl. vii). Whether its indication on 62 reflects the presence of such weapons in Nishapur cannot be determined; its representation may be due simply to an iconographic tradition.

The horse is quite as fantastic as the man. It is black except for its face and the decoration with which its body and legs are lavishly covered; these areas are in reserve, spotted with color. The horse's eye is treated like the rider's, two parallel lines continuing beyond it for a considerable distance. (This form of eye is also to be seen in some of the Nishapur ware decorated with yellow-staining black—for example, a piece mentioned on page 215.) The horse's tail is tied, a continuation of a Sasanian custom exemplified in a silver bowl of the time of Peroz I (457–483) in the Metropolitan (34.33). Other Sasanian bowls showing horses with tied tails (Pope, *Survey*, IV, pls. 209–214) are in the Hermitage Museum, the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Metropolitan Museum, and the Freer Gallery of Art. The decorations on the horse's fore- and hind-quarters consist of curling stems ending in palmettes. Two of these palmettes are enclosed in heart shapes. The curve of the stems is broken by little leaved excrescences similar in style to some in the Nishapur polychrome on white ware (Group 4, 56, 58). They also appear on Nishapur architectural elements: polychromed plaster squinch members found in Sabz Pushan (Hauser, Upton & Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, November, 1938, p. 7, figs. 5, 6). These excrescences occur also in the glazed pottery of Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 234, fig. 9, p. 244, fig. 15). They are likewise to be seen on a bronze salver representing an arcaded building (Pope, *Survey*, IV, pl. 237), a piece originally published as Sasanian but now considered by some to be of a later date.

Poised on the horse's rump is an animal resembling a cheetah. Cheetahs were used in Iran for hunting, but the animal seen here apparently attends someone other than a hunter, for one does not hunt with a sword. Although the horsemen in this group from the Museum's excavations seem invariably to be carrying swords, bowls in other museums, almost certainly from Nishapur, depict polo players (Jakobsen, *Islamische Keramik* Exhibition Catalogue, fig. 3; Erdmann, *Pantheon*, XVIII, p. 164). Polo was a favorite subject in later times, and representations of it are to be seen in both luster and minai ware of the Seljuq period.

With crested head and "wing," the animal on 62 looks supernatural. This interpretation is perhaps supported by

the fact that other bowls have been found since 1940 on which the major element is a riderless horse with an even more fantastic animal placed above it. In some of these representations, as on 86, a fragment probably from the same workshop as 62, the animal appears with a beak and a leaflike tail. On one particular version the body is covered with scalelike forms. All these cheetahlike creatures may perhaps be considered survivors, in a debased form, of mythological animals depicted in Iranian art as far back as the first millennium B.C. These early animals are sometimes depicted with wings, sometimes with birdlike heads (A. Godard, *Le Trésor de Ziwiye*, Haarlem, 1950, fig. 21). In paintings of the seventh century A.D. a winged lionlike creature is represented (Iakubovski, *Paintings of Ancient Pendzhikent*, p. 93, fig. 21).

The ground of 62 is filled with horned animals, birds, and an assortment of ornamental motifs. As is customary, the animals and birds are represented as of the same size. This treatment seems to be an inheritance from the Sasanian period, for it occurs on a Sasanian seal portraying a hare and an ibex (Pope, *Survey*, IV, pl. 256 D). (For a similar treatment in tenth-century monochrome luster ware, see Pézard, *Céramique*, pl. cxxi.) Except for their heads and necks, which are in reserve, the animals and birds are painted black. As is the case on numerous other bowls, the necks of both are decorated with collars, those of the animals made chevronlike. One animal, seen just above the horse's raised foreleg, has a curled band in reserve descending from its collar. This happens to be a poor version of a decoration often seen on both animals and birds in this group (63, 64, 73, 79, 81, 83, 86, 88). It is probably present simply to break up the dark mass of the animal's body. The band is also to be seen on birds in two other wares (Group 3, 10; Group 6, 48). Another distinctive detail on 62 is the group of dots placed at the ears and tails of the animals. Here the groups are of four dots; on comparable pieces (63, 74) they are of three. This motif is also to be found on objects of earlier date, for example, on a post-Sasanian silver vessel, where it is used in conjunction with plants (Smirnov, *Argenterie orientale*, pls. lxxv, lxxvi).

The birds of 62, even less realistic than those of 59, have crests composed of three balls on short stems, suggesting that they may be peacocks. Their tails consist either of three parallel lines ending at different lengths in triangular forms (compare 79, 82) or, in one instance, of a large inverted pear shape or wing shape, the pointed tip of which is attached to the pointed tip of the body. This added shape, which seems not to be an integral part of the bird, is decorated with a palmette (compare 74, 76, 77). Birds with added tails of this shape but decorated instead with peacock eyes appear in the polychrome on white ware of Afrasiyab (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. xxiii, top, right), but the bodies and heads of the Afrasiyab birds are unlike those of Nishapur. Tails of somewhat similar shape, but drawn to suggest a wing, are to be seen on glazed earthenware bowls excavated at Merv

(Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 249, fig. 17). This use of a pointed pear shape for a tail goes back to the portrayal of peacocks in the Sasanian period (Smirnov, *Argentaria orientalis*, pl. LXXII). Although the birds on the Nishapur bowls seem intended as peacocks, it should be noted that a monochrome luster bowl of the tenth century (Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 576 C) shows a ducklike bird with a tail of the same shape, painted solid.

The subsidiary ornament of 62 ranges from the simple dot in circle motif to clusters of dotted circles with added projecting elements. Among these is a cluster of four, constructed from a figure eight with a semicircle added at the sides. This method of drawing the motif is evident wherever it occurs. Common in the animate buff ware, it is also found in the ware decorated with yellow-staining black (Group 8, 13). Spaced unevenly around the rim of 62 are four groups of boldly painted, meaningless Kufic letters, their bases at the rim, and repeated among the other motifs is a conventional form of the word *barakeh* (blessing) drawn on a thin base line. This word, so drawn, appears on many of the animate bowls (63, 74, 76, 79, 86).

The decoration on the exterior (62b) consists of pointed vertical shapes composed of joined curved brackets alternating with vertical lines of herringbone. The pointed shapes are colored alternately green and yellow. The contrast between a complex, agitated design on the interior and a static, repetitious design on the exterior is typical of the animate group.

Another bowl, 86, was doubtless made in the same workshop.

63 a,b BOWL (reconstruction)

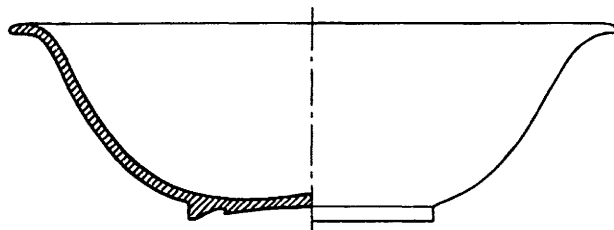
D 37.3, H 10.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.622a, b

Some of the fragments of this bowl are in the Teheran museum. The engobe varies from buff to bone. The base, which has a foot ring, is not glazed. Much of the decoration is in reserve: the bird and leafy forms ending in palmettes in the central medallion and, near the rim, the undulating stem bearing trilobed half-leaves. This use of black on a buff or bone engobe is common in the animate group, either in particular areas, as here, or over most of the interior. The leafy forms filling the space above and below the bird closely resemble those seen on the body of the horse in 62; furthermore, the horned animals encircling the wall resemble those on 62. For comment on the band projecting rearward from each animal's chevron collar, see 62. The small subsidiary motifs—clusters of dotted circles, thin-lined *barakehs*, and groups of dots at the animals' horns and tails—are all to be seen on the previous piece. In addition, there is present a large version of the word *barakeh*, reduced to two letters and drawn in outline. One of the letters, apparently a *kaf*, is drawn in mirror writing. This particular form, which occurs on several of the animate bowls (65, 77, 80, 86), is also to be seen in the opaque white ware (Group 6, 11, 13, 17). The band

of trilobed leaves near the rim of 63 occurs on other animate bowls (66, 91) as well as on one of the inanimate bowls (1). It is to be found, too, in a similar ware of Merv, painted in a similar way, in reserve in a band of black (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 249, fig. 17). At the rim of 63 two small motifs alternate: a pair of superimposed triangles and a device of dotted circles. The decoration on the exterior (63b) consists of two horizontal bands of herringbone enclosing a decoration of lozenges, sharp-pointed biconvex forms, and dotted circles.

64 BOWL

D 22.5, H 6.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.14



1:3

Buff body and surface. Glaze almost disintegrated. Base, concave, has groove forming foot ring; it is covered with engobe and glaze. Exterior decoration: joined curved brackets resembling those to be seen on 74. On the interior the central figure is that of a man, his head in profile, drinking from a goblet. Although the pose suggests that he is dancing, he is in truth seated. This position, in which the legs form a lozenge shape, seems to be an adaptation of an early iconographical tradition. The pose occurs on Bactrian coins. In Sasanian examples the space between the legs is not always present. A silver plate of the sixth or seventh century, on which the figure represents a moon god, shows the legs closely crossed, leaving no space (Pope, *Survey*, IV, pl. 207 B). On the other hand, figures more or less contemporary with the one on this Nishapur bowl were sometimes represented with their feet nearly touching but not crossing (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 13A).

The breeches of the man on 64, decorated with groups of connected circles, have, over each knee, a strange "patch" with double outline, decorated with crosses. Such "patches" are not found on the breeches of Nishapur equestrian figures, only on those of seated figures. The practice of changing the decoration from area to area, irrespective of their fundamental meanings, is characteristic of this ware (compare 62, decoration of space between legging and stirrup strap). The knee patches can be explained as a misunderstanding by the potters of older, more accurate images. One of these correct versions, perhaps of the eighth century, occurs on a painted wooden votive tablet from Dandan Oiluq (Khotan), in which the body garment of a cross-legged bodhisattva, partly con-

cealed by an outer coat, reappears on his knees, just above his high boots (M. A. Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, II, Oxford, 1907, pl. LXI; M. Bussagli, *Painting of Central Asia*, Geneva, 1963, p. 57). This representation would appear to conform to reality when a figure is so dressed and so posed. In the tenth century, however, when their origin had been forgotten, the rounded or oval shapes between the boots and garments were decorated arbitrarily, as on 64. One example among several of such patches in the buff ware of Nishapur occurs on a bowl in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Wilkinson, *Iranian Ceramics*, pl. 26), where they appear on the breeches of two bearded men sitting cross-legged, as on 64, and with even less rationality, on the skirts of two bearded men sitting on stools. This confusion is paralleled on a gold medallion in the Freer Gallery, probably a Buwayhid piece, on which a male figure has a decoration of concentric circles upon his knees (Bahrami in *Archaeologica Orientalia in Memoriam Ernst Herzfeld*, pl. 1a).

The head of the man on 64 is remarkable for its very large eye. The lips, chin, cheekline, beard, forehead curls, and decorated hair are all reminiscent of the figure on 62. A bifurcated scarf (compare 59) descends from either shoulder, so drawn that there is confusion as to what is scarf and what is hair. The scarf has an added decoration of rectangular forms in reserve, probably present simply to break up its black areas. Two round curls (?) appear just below the man's left shoulder. There is almost a suggestion that he wears a veil fastened to the back of his head. Some figures on Abbasid luster ware have pointed caps with a long veil or scarf falling behind almost to the ground; however, the relationship is not close enough to support a belief that the figure of 64 wears a veil.

The figure's tight-fitting shirtlike garment, with no opening visible in front, is decorated with a herringbone pattern. His leggings and shoes resemble those of the figure on 62; see further comment there. For comment on the possible significance of the lifted goblet, see 59.

The spaces around the figure are filled with a variety of ornamental motifs, lightly indicated, and two birds, their bodies decorated with a version of the curled band also seen in 62 and 63. Surrounding the central medallion is a band of pseudo Kufic, decorated with dot-centered circles. This "inscription" is similar in style to the pseudo Kufic on other animate bowls (73, 78, 87, 91) and an inanimate piece (48). At the rim of 64 is a band of black with a series of half-leaves in reserve, all of them placed above the stem, unlike the treatment of a similar decoration on 63.

65 DISH FRAGMENT

D of dish (estimated) 26, H 4.5 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

This piece, representing a type that was made occasionally in Nishapur, originally had four short feet. The male

figure drawn on the bottom probably sat cross-legged, either with both hands raised or with his right hand resting on his thigh. His head, with its heavy, arched eyebrows and fiercely upturned and curled mustaches, is unique. So too is the stiffly curled pigtail, which was perhaps balanced by another on the other side of the head, where it would have had to curl in the opposite direction. But although pigtails have not been found on other Nishapur vessels, they have a long history in the Near East, appearing in Elamite stone reliefs of the third millennium B.C. (Herzfeld, *Iran in the Ancient East*, p. 188, fig. 304). In Central Asia artificial pigtails as well as natural ones have long been known (Yetts, *Burlington Magazine*, April, 1926, p. 173). On other Nishapur vessels what may at first seem to be pigtails is really the tailed scarf seen on 59, 64, 66. The hare on 65, holding a paw to its mouth, although a strange conception, is not unique in the buff ware. It is hard to believe that the animal's pose is anything more than an artistic conceit. For another fantastic treatment of a hare, see 80.

66 BOWL

D 16, H 6.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

In poor condition, stained beneath the glaze. In contrast to the pose on 65, the man's feet are entirely concealed beneath his dress. His profile face has been drawn so that his nose and mouth are eliminated. The cheekline is a variant of those on 62, 64. On many of the poorly drawn bowls of this ware the profile heads are portrayed in this manner, with the eye drawn as though seen full face and the nose barely indicated. On a bowl in the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City, the nose, as on 66, is entirely absent. On 66 the man's hair clearly ends at his shoulder, but the bifurcated scarf that falls from either shoulder suggests, because of its wavy contours, that he has pigtails—a confusion also seen on 59 and 64. The suggestion of pigtails is even stronger on a bowl in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, doubtless from Nishapur, on which the figure is female. The figure on 66 holds a wand in each hand. These end in a cluster of four dotted circles; the one in his right hand has horizontal branches ending in dotted circles. Other bowls found since 1940 have figures holding leaved stems (Wilkinson, *Iranian Ceramics*, pl. 26). In Central Asian paintings of about two centuries earlier than these bowls (Le Coq, *Chotscho*, pls. 12, 16, 30; Iakubovski, *Paintings of Ancient Pendzhikent*, pl. xxxvii; M. Bussagli, *Painting of Central Asia*, Geneva, 1963, pp. 105–107, 112), both male and female figures hold stems of a more graceful nature. The carrying of flower stems continued for centuries; see, for example, a miniature of a prince by Sultan Muhammad in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Kühnel, *Islamische Kleinkunst*, p. 55, fig. 22).

67 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 6.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

A portion of a bowl that probably resembled 59 but with a different decoration on the skirt.

68 FRAGMENT

W 5.6 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 40.170.702

Pale buff engobe. It would appear that there were once two human figures on this piece. What their relationship was is not clear. Only the bent arm of the larger figure remains. The eye of the smaller figure, with its extended lines, is reminiscent of the horseman's eye on 62. The ground, from which all glaze has disappeared, is completely covered with yellow. The decoration on the exterior is like that on 74b, but with vertical strokes in every unit.

69 DISH FRAGMENT (rim)

W 6.7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.577

The ground is colored yellow. The decoration shows part of a human head covered with short curls in a style unlike that of the figures previously seen. Another unusual feature is the line of small circles parallel to what remains of the figure's sword. The sword itself is the straight-bladed Sasanian type to be seen on 62 and 71. The ground is filled with the usual clusters of dotted circles (compare 62, 63). The exterior is decorated at the rim with joined curved brackets, alternately yellow and plain (or possibly once green). In the latter a dash appears between two dots.

70 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 13 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

The subject, a standing man, has both hands upraised. He wears a belt to which two straps are attached, perhaps to hold a sword. On his left upper arm is an indication of a brassard. His scarf, decorated with circular spots in reserve, is divided into three tails on either side instead of the customary two. For discussion of related pieces, see 59. Little of the background decoration remains, though enough to confirm the presence of two common motifs: the dotted circle and a variant of the pseudo-Kufic inscription seen on 63, 65, 79, 80, and 86. A buff ware bowl in the Metropolitan (65.270.1), presumably from Nishapur, shows the same peculiar decoration of circular spots in reserve on a cloak; in both this and 70 the potter was possibly confused as to what was hair and what garment.

In a wall painting at Bazalik the hair of a seated deva is decorated in the same fashion, with a series of circles in reserve (M. Bussagli, *Painting of Central Asia*, Geneva, 1963, p. 99).

71 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 8.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

A horseman brandishing a straight-bladed Sasanian-type sword in his left hand (compare 62, 69). Probably he had a shield in his right hand, as does a horseman on a buff ware fragment, presumably from Nishapur, in the Berlin Museum (Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, X, p. 11, fig. 12). The subject of a horseman with sword in one hand and shield in the other also occurs in monochrome luster ware (*Olsen Collection of Persian Pottery*, sale catalogue, Sotheby & Co., June 8, 1964, no. 46, illus.).

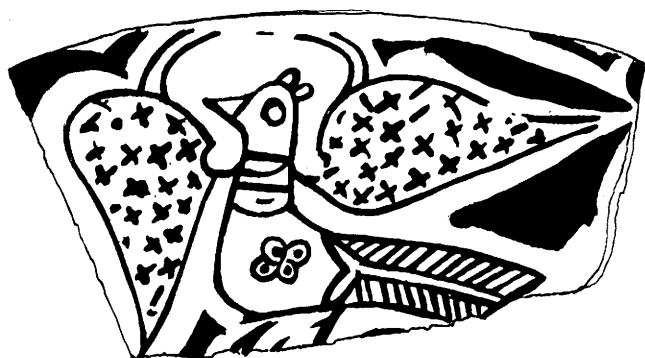
The binding of the figure's tunic, which overlaps, is drawn in such a way that it resembles Kufic, and the lower part of the saddle cloth is covered with a repeat motif suggesting a Kufic letter. The decorative motif on the rider's sleeve, consisting of four balls connected by several lines, is reminiscent of small ornamental devices that appear on some of the ware decorated with yellow-staining black (Group 8, 17, 18). The legging, shoe, and stirrup are similar to those seen on 62. The ornaments on the horse's breeching strap are evidently meant to represent dangles of metal and colored wool; a pinecone shape alternates with a five-cusped shape, some of whose lobes are dotted. Similar ornaments appear in representations of horses on Sasanian and post-Sasanian metal dishes (Sarre, *Die Kunst des Alten Persien*, pl. 113) and on a Sasanian bronze incense burner (Pope, *Survey*, IV, pl. 240). The ground of 71 shows one of the usual clusters of small dotted circles (compare 62, 63, 69) and a small cross, probably with no religious significance, its arms ending in circular blobs. This cross motif is likewise seen on 72b. In a somewhat similar form it also occurs on the ware decorated with yellow-staining black (Group 8, 6).

72 a,b PITCHER (restored)

H 26.6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.247

The base, which has a wide groove, is glazed. Bone-colored engobe. The spout, the ring at the shoulder, and the ring around the belly are colored red. The head is yellow. On the shoulder, in reserve against green, are small quatre-foils, colored yellow, outlined in black. The ground of the decorated central section is mostly yellow. The two rows of circles in reserve in the near-black band are bone colored. Some of them contain what appears to be the Arabic letter ط (ta), or even an ا (alef) followed by a ل (lam), placed on their sides. Such resemblances, however, may be accidental. For a somewhat similar use of crescents in the animate

group, see 75. The two birds remaining of the original four have crests of dotted circles that suggest a cross. For a simpler version without this suggestion, see 62. Probably peacocks, though possibly doves, these birds are colored red except for their heads, which are without color. On their necks are triple chevrons, one of the common details of the birds and animals in this ware. Each bird wears a tricusped halo to which wings have been attached, an extraordinary feature in this ware and unknown in any other. A variation is on a sherd in the Royal Ontario



Museum, Toronto. Another variation occurs on a bowl formerly in the Matossian collection, present location unknown, in which the halo is of the same shape and the wings are attached, not to the halo, but to the birds' bodies (*Exposition d'art musulman* Catalogue, pl. III). The space around the birds on 72 is filled with motifs similar to those of 59 and 62, including disparate ones joined by curved lines or affixed to one another. One of the devices, composed of four black dots arranged as a cross, also occurs on 71. The handle of the pitcher is decorated with a guilloche in black outline, touched with green. Black is added to the ground to form a dark band.

Fragments of similar buff ware pitchers were found. Animal-head pitchers were also made in Nishapur in monochrome ware (Group 9, 1) and unglazed ware (Group 12, 125). Such pitchers appear to have been popular in other parts of Iran also, which is not surprising, considering the quantity of animal-head vessels made in Iran even before the Christian era, let alone the Islamic. For an animal-head ewer in green monochrome ware with graffiato decoration, probably from northwestern Iran, see Pézard, *Céramique*, pl. LVIII; for two from Iraq, see Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, p. 17, figs. 50, 51.

73 a,b BOWL

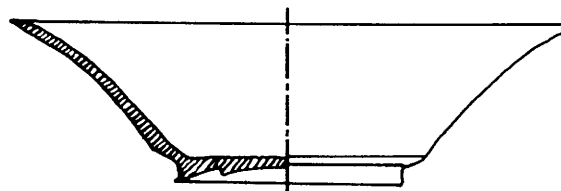
D 21.5, H 8.3 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Here one sees two peculiarities in detail: the wings the Nishapur potters sometimes attached to the necks of their birds rather than to the bodies (the body here already seems to have a pair of wings folded upon it) and the band

in reserve on the black body, extending downward from the collar and ending in a curl. The curled band is seen in a variety of treatments on both the birds and animals of the buff ware (see comment at 62). This curled band was occasionally elaborated into a carefully drawn half-palmette, as seen on 79. The ground of the central medallion is filled with yellow and dotted with green. From its enclosing ring several triangular forms intrude, each with a dotted circle as a finial. Triangular forms also decorate the rim, in black on a band of solid yellow. Between this decoration and the central medallion, on the bone ground, are three banks of repetitive pseudo-Kufic script, the tops of the letters ending in open triangles. Generally similar bands of script occur on 48, 64, 78, 87, and 91. The exterior (73b) is decorated with trees alternating with large inverted triangles. The latter are filled with smaller superimposed triangles and concentric lozenges, both motifs touched with yellow and green. The trunks of the trees are yellow, the stiff vertical leaves, green. A tree of this distinctive form occurs on the interior of another buff ware bowl, reputedly from Nishapur (*Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, fig. 5), and it also decorates the exterior of an opaque white ware bowl (fragment) found in Nishapur (Group 6, 24).

74 a,b BOWL

D 23, H 9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.26



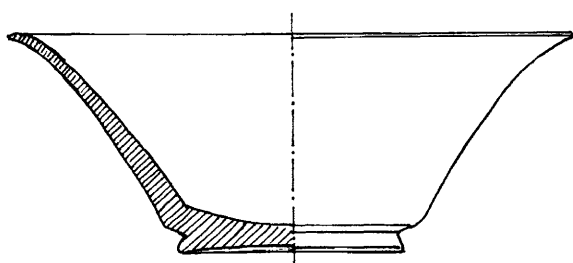
1:3

On the bottom is a bird with collar and body band, possibly a peacock in view of its crest of three dotted balls on stems. Attached to its tail, point to point, is a winglike shape containing a small feathered wing and a triangle of black dots, the latter a common decorative addition in the animate group (63). Around the wall are more birds of the same type, though different in that their almost detached tails are painted entirely as if they were wings. Unlike the one in the center, each of these birds has a bud or small flower in its beak. Although the significance of this is unknown, birds are found with leaves in their beaks on Sasanian silver vessels (Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, April, 1960, p. 267, fig. 32, left; Pope, *Survey*, IV, pl. 216 A). Alternating with the birds are horned animals of the usual type, with the usual groups of dots added at their ears. The yellow ground is strewn with the small decorative motifs common to the animate group. At the rim on one side is a word in Kufic, perhaps intended as *barakeh* (blessing), though it is not correctly written. Re-

peated elsewhere is a word in pseudo Kufic, drawn in a single black line, probably meant to be *barakeh* (compare 62, 76, 79, 86). The ground of the central medallion is mostly black instead of yellow, a feature also seen on 63 and 84. (For another example, see Wilkinson, *Iranian Ceramics*, pl. 26.) The simple decoration on the exterior (74b) consists of joined curved brackets, the alternate units containing a median line. The base, slightly concave, with beveled edge, is glazed.

75 BOWL

Original D 23, H 9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.109



1:3

This atypical piece has a reddish body. The exterior is entirely undecorated—unusual for buff ware. The three plain bands, one at the rim, two near the bottom, are red. The background of the birds and of the rosette in the center is yellow. The rosette is encircled with green. The open hearts of this rosette are not characteristic of Nishapur pottery. They are found, rather, in the polychrome pottery of Afrasiyab. In an example from Afrasiyab in the Metropolitan (28.82) the heart shapes are somewhat disguised (Dimand, *Handbook*, fig. 101).

The birds of 75, walking in procession, in itself unusual, have exceptionally heavy crests of a semifoliate form not commonly seen in this ware, the nearest approach seen on 59. The space around the birds is unusually free of decorative details. The crescents, left in reserve in the band of black beneath the birds, are a type of decoration that appears in a slightly different form on other buff ware pieces (compare 72). This crescent motif also appears in the inanimate group, filling the four sectors of a Nishapur fragment in the Metropolitan (40.170.692); for another example from Nishapur see Wilkinson, *Iranian Ceramics*, pl. 24. A study fragment from Nishapur in the Metropolitan, with buff body, bone-colored engobe, and a ridge on the exterior at the beginning of the vertical rim, has the crescent motif on the interior, circumscribing the bowl beneath a rim decoration of vertical strokes like that on 91. These crescents, which also occur in the pottery of Afrasiyab, are perhaps variants of the peacock eyes so common in several wares of Nishapur and elsewhere, but the addition to the crescent of strokes and a dot, as in 75, seems to be a peculiarity of Nishapur.

76 BOWL

D 24.5, H 6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Each bird's added tail is filled with a palmette. For a similar tail, see 62. The small subsidiary motifs projecting from the tails illustrate once again (see 59) the artist's love of attaching disparate motifs one to another. Tails of the same shape with similar added motifs occur, too, in Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 249, fig. 17). The spaces around the birds on 76 are strewn with the customary motifs, including minute pseudo-Kufic words. The glaze has completely disappeared. The distinctive small ridge around the bottom occurs occasionally in the animate group of the Nishapur buff ware. It is also found in some of the ninth-century glazed earthenware of Ctesiphon.

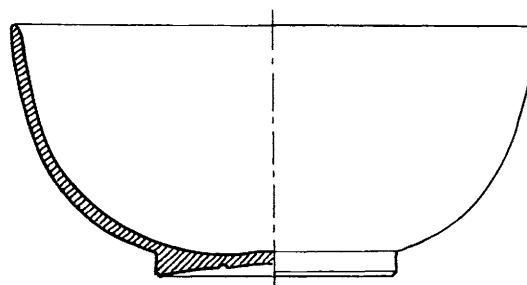
77 DISH

D 18.5, H 7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

The glaze has completely disappeared, leaving the strokes of opaque yellow visible in the illustration as light tones. One can see how the black outlines were partially obscured, as is so often the case, by the application of yellow. The decoration features an animal and five birds. The animal has the usual long horns, sticklike legs, and chevroned neck. The birds' winglike feathered tails are also seen on 74. One of the birds holds a lanceolate form, to which is attached a dotted circle giving the appearance of an earring, in its beak. This is not unusual in the representation of a bird (compare 74), but the animal has merely the lanceolate form hanging from its mouth, and this is uncommon. Above the animal is a pseudo-Kufic word in outline. The usual small, simple motifs are scattered over the rest of the ground. The decoration on the exterior, consisting of joined curved brackets, resembles that of 74.

78 BOWL

D 21, H 9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.80



1:3

Bone-colored engobe. The central medallion yellow. The bodies of two of the four birds are green, the other two black. The birds have small crests. Their tails are adorned

with a thin curl and a short perpendicular line ending in a triangle. Above the black ring of the central medallion is a band of repetitive pseudo Kufic (compare 48, 64, 73, 87, 91). The band at the border is filled with triangles containing a heart-shaped motif. The upright triangles are colored green, the inverted triangles have a liberal application of yellow. The decoration on the exterior, consisting of joined curved brackets, resembles that of 74. The base, concave, has a small groove near the center. The base is glazed.

79 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

H 11.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.525

Beveled base. The decoration consists chiefly of birds and an animal (or animals). The birds are drawn more carefully than usual, and their bodies are adorned with an elaborated version of the usual band—here become a trilobed leaf form. Their crests, composed of two triangles, suggest the spurs of a pheasant (compare 58). The birds' tails (only one survives) consist of three vertical lines, the shortest of which ends in a spiral, the other in triangular forms. For a less precise version, see 62. The animal is perhaps related to the griffinlike creature on 86; its tail is a smaller version of the bird's tail. Filling the spaces between the birds and the animal are the usual pseudo-Kufic words and small decorative motifs. For a bowl found at Merv with similar but less well drawn birds, see Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 249, fig. 17.

80 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

D 8.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Many of the Nishapur buff ware animals, like this one, have tails in the form of a simple half-palmette (compare 79, 86). A vegetal form issues from the animal's mouth. The animal's eyes and brow are treated in the manner of the horseman's and horse's on 62. The Kufic *kaf*, assuming this is the letter the potter wished to write in his pseudo inscription, is drawn mirrorwise (compare 40 and 63 among others). The glaze has entirely disappeared.

81 DISH (some restoration)

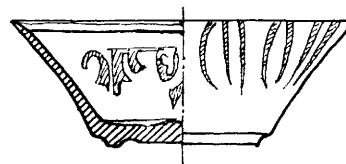
D 17, H 2.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.112

This piece, which lacks its rim and all of its glaze, has three short feet. The central bird has wings that are more curved than is customary. The three birds in the outer circle have dotted tails. These birds and the three horned animals, unlike the central bird, have the often-seen curled band in reserve. Among the minor motifs scattered over the ground is a group of four nearly triangular shapes

with a circular yellow spot in the center. This motif, in slightly different form, is to be seen in the polychrome on white pottery of Afrasiyab (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. ix, above).

82 DISH FRAGMENT

Original D 14, H 5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB



1:3

Base has semicircular groove approximately eight millimeters wide. Buff ground with scattered spots of yellow and green. The plain band adjacent to the rim is yellow. The decoration on the wall consists of a line of Kufic with its base toward the rim. It may contain the word *yumn* (happiness). The bird in the central medallion has a tail of three parallel lines ending in small triangular forms (compare 62 and 79); hanging from its beak on a stalk are three dotted circles and a leaflike form (compare 77). The decoration on the exterior resembles that of 74 except that vertical strokes appear between the biconvex forms and not within them.

83 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

D 10 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

The glaze has entirely disappeared, leaving intact, however, the touch of red slip that was painted between the animal's horns. The drawing of the animal's head, neck, and body decoration duplicates the treatment on 62, 63, and other pieces. The bird's body decoration, curtailed, ends in a trefoil. Among the subsidiary decorations is a swastika, not encountered on other buff ware pieces, but found on a larger scale in the black on white ware (Group 3, 26).

84 FRAGMENT

H 10 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Another example of the use of black, instead of yellow, as a background color (compare 63 and 74). The decoration was drawn in outline on the buff surface, after which the black was applied, leaving a margin between the outline and the applied pigment. In some related bowls yellow was applied in the same way. The birds are atypical in that their bodies are left blank and their wings are filled

with nothing more than parallel lines. For a complete Nishapur bowl with black background, see *Exposition d'art musulman* Catalogue, pl. III.

85 DISH FRAGMENT

W 9 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MIB

The piece has lost its glaze. The rim (upper left in the illustration) is everted. The ground and rim are decorated with branches of two types, one with leaves drawn in her-ringbone fashion, the other with diamond-shaped leaves resembling those on the trees of 73. The collared bird has counterparts in the imitation luster ware made in Nishapur (Group 6, 47) as well as in Afrasiyab. Such collars also appear on animals represented on luster bowls of Iraq of a type dated by Kühnel to about the last quarter of the ninth century (Kühnel, *Ars Islamica*, I, pp. 155, 156, figs. 5, 6) and by Lane to the tenth century (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 12B).

86 a,b BOWL FRAGMENT

W 22 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MMA 40.177.499

Originally probably as large a bowl as 62 and doubtless from the same workshop. Engobe pale bone color. The decoration probably included four horses among the birds, and a further difference is that the bone-colored engobe is painted yellow only in small areas. The black body of the horse is broken up by details painted in reserve. Drooping vertically from its collar are four parallel lines, each ending on a curl. Leafy forms on the rear half of the body are decorated with dots, as seen on many other buff ware vessels. The gray patch to the rear of the forelegs is due to the scaling off of the glaze. The "cheetah" that appears above the horse has been given a birdlike head by means of a stroke of pigment suggesting a curved beak. This treatment, occurring in many such representations, suggests that a mythological, griffinlike animal is intended. The tails of such animals are treated as foliate forms (compare 79, 80; see also Wilkinson, *Iranian Ceramics*, pl. 26). Kufic lettering in various styles and sizes is scattered on the ground of 86. The decoration on the exterior (86b), in a radical contrast of style, consists of a highly stylized form of pseudo Kufic alternating with a compound lozenge. The space immediately inside the outline of the lozenge is yellow; the four small lozenges are touched with green. For similar lozenges decorating a garment, see 59.

87 a,b BOWL FRAGMENT

W 12.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MIB

Bone-colored engobe. Enough remains of the bird's head

in the central area to indicate that the decoration there was probably akin to that of 74 or 77. The bird appears to have a leaf hanging from its beak. On the wall of the bowl are two bands of pseudo-Kufic inscription comparable in style to those of 48, 64, 78, and 91, all of which likewise have an added decoration of dotted circles. Beneath the rim is a band of compartments with flattened ogee tops, apparently filled alternately with double-outlined dots and "scales" and a device based on two dotted circles. The "scales" are drawn in the manner of the feathers on one of the birds on 88. The shape of the compartments indicates an origin in eastern Iran or Transoxiana; in both regions it was popular in metalwork as well as in ceramics. The shape was common in Central Asia and China in the period before the rise of Islam, and it continued in the pottery of the Tashkent region as late as the end of the nineteenth century. For its early use in metalwork, see Smirnov, *Argenterie orientale*, pl. C, nos. 213, 214. For the full development of the shape, its top more rounded than on 87, revealing its oriental origin, see Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 561 A. For a later use, see F. R. Martin, *Moderne Keramik von Centralasien*, Stockholm, 1897, pl. 12. For its occurrence in the Nishapur ware decorated with yellow-staining black, see Group 8, 25.

The exterior (87b) is decorated with joined curved brackets, colored alternately yellow and green, alternating with a column of short slanting strokes.

88 a,b BOWL

D 30, H 13.6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MIB

Reddish body, buff engobe. The quality of the glaze is poor; staining has occurred beneath it. The animals and some of the birds have the typical curled band on their bodies. Some of the birds have a leaf in their beak. Among the subsidiary decorations are stalks with horizontal branches ending in "flowers." There can hardly be a greater contrast in the spirit of Nishapur pottery than that offered by 88, with its jumble of animals and birds swirling counterclockwise, and any characteristic example of the contemporary black on white ware. The exterior decoration (88b) consists of pointed pear shapes occupying the triangular spaces of a chevron. One pair of the shapes in echelon is colored green, the next yellow.

89 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 12.2 cm ; exact provenance unknown

MIB

The exterior is unusual in that a semicircular crinkled lug is added to it. The decoration is composed of vertical stripes, some filled with slanting strokes. Those following the contour below the lug are filled with dots instead of strokes.

90 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MIB

The decoration of the exterior (illustrated) suggests a highly stylized Kufic script. The verticals, forming half-palmettes, are drawn with a certain flourish. The interior (not illustrated) is decorated with birds and animals somewhat in the manner of 88. Another instance, like 62, 74, 86, and 88, of strong stylistic contrast between interior and exterior.

91 a,b BOWL FRAGMENT

W 12 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MMA 40.170.524

A portion of this fragment is in the Teheran museum. Bone-colored engobe. On the interior, adjacent to the rim, a band of black containing an undulating stem giving off half-leaves. This motif, drawn in reserve, has the added dots seen in many such decorations. For a generally similar border, see 63. Connecting the band to the rim are groups of five vertical lines. The spaces between the groups are filled with green and yellow alternately. This simple rim adornment, uncommon in the present ware,

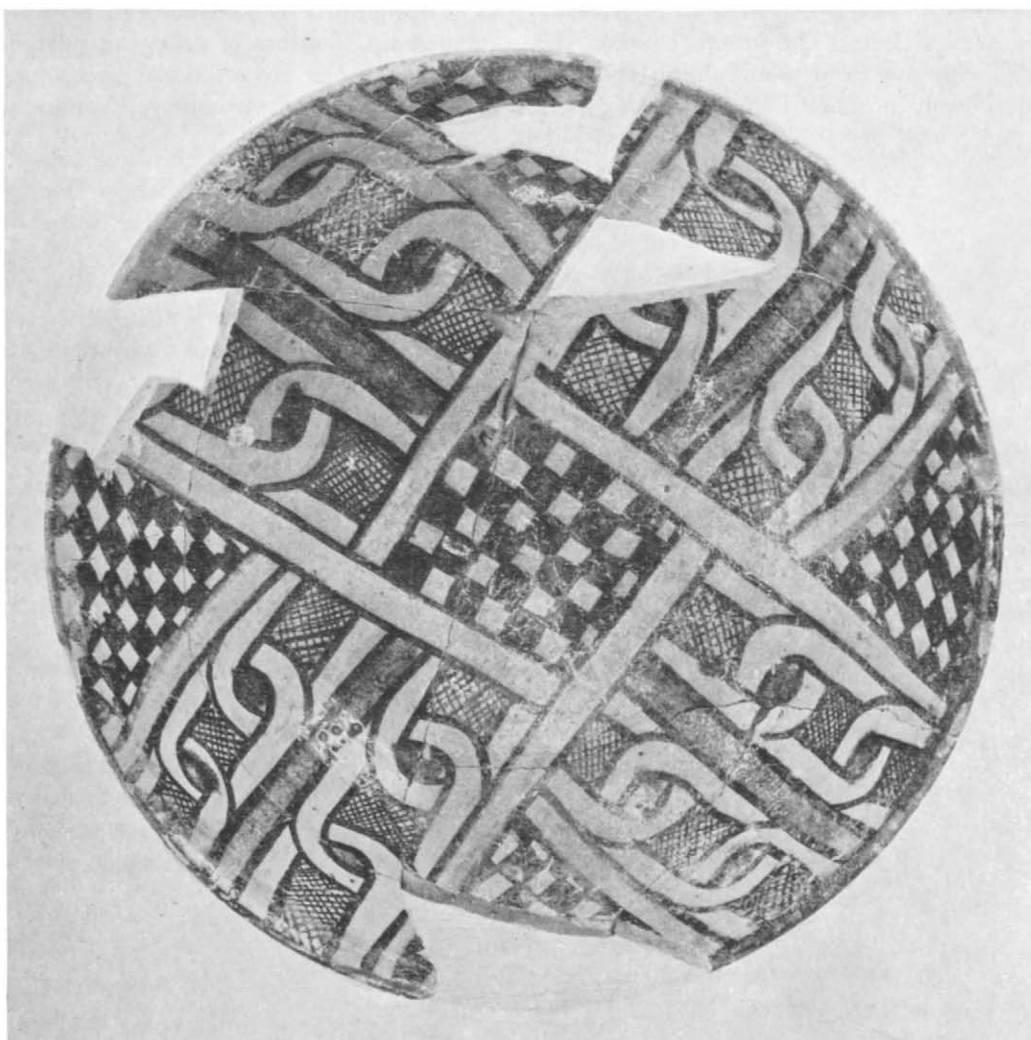
appears with three vertical lines on a polychrome on white bowl found in Nishapur (Group 4, 57), suggesting something of a link between the two wares. Comparable rim decorations occur on three bowls related to the animate buff ware in that they are decorated with single human figures: a bowl, reputedly from Nishapur, with a dancing man (*Sept mille ans d'art en Iran* Exhibition Catalogue, no. 944), a bowl, reputedly from Gurgan, with a dancing man (*ibid.*, no. 986), and a bowl, reputedly from Nishapur, in a private collection, showing an archer with a headdress, resembling the figure on a Nishapur polychrome on white piece (Group 4, 48).

Below the leafy border on 91 is a band of repetitive pseudo-Kufic script, adorned with dotted circles, probably a corruption of the word *barakeh* (blessing). (Compare scripts on 48, 64, 73, 78, 87.) In the center the surviving portion of a bird's wing indicates a decoration with birds and perhaps animals. The exterior (91b) is decorated with a large chevron whose inverted triangles are filled alternately with a single hatching of slanted strokes and the four-dotted crosshatching so common on the interiors of the inanimate vessels (5, 6, 16, 24, 28, 34, 39). The upright triangles contain a half-palmette with an extended tip. Touches of yellow and green complete the decoration. For an additional specimen of this ware, closely related to the opaque yellow ware, see Group 7, 6.

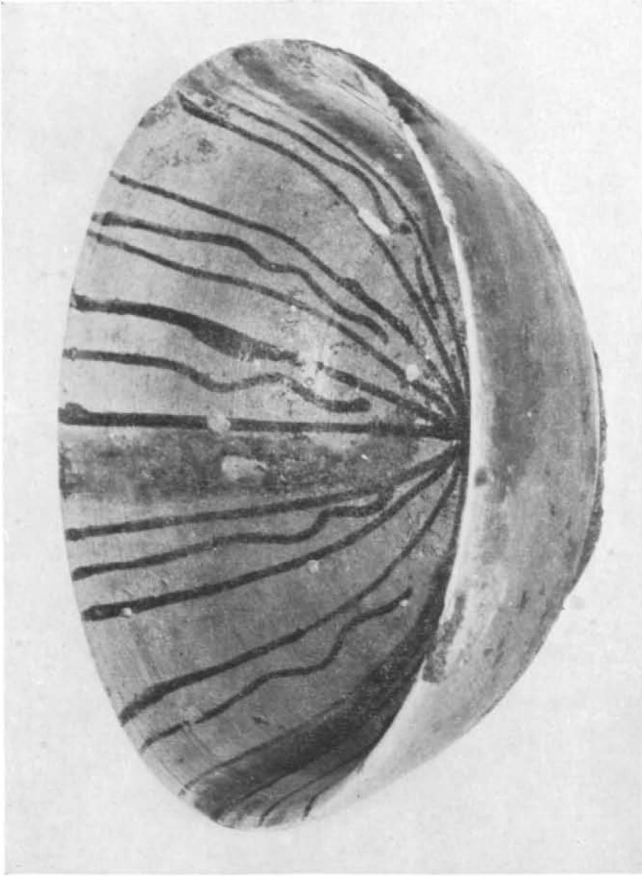
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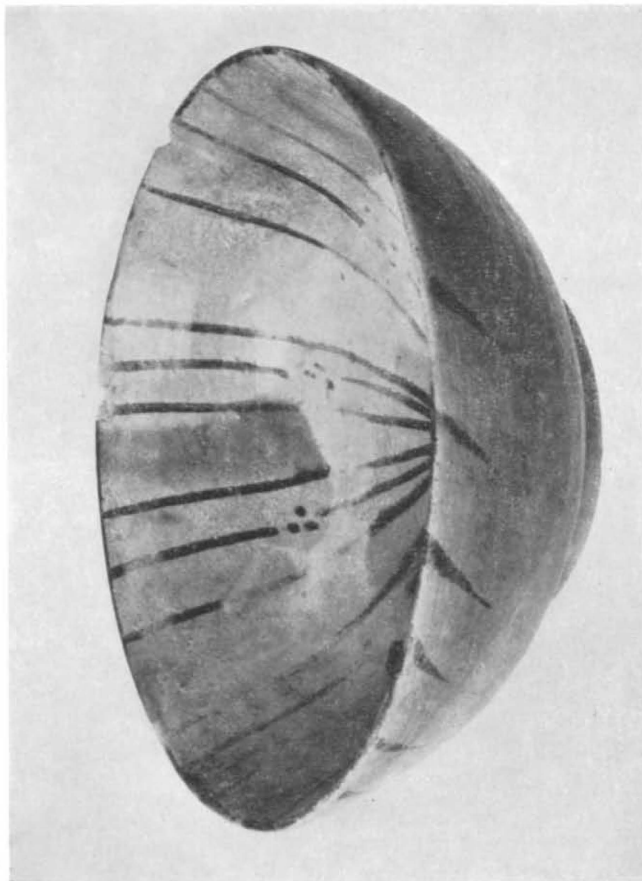
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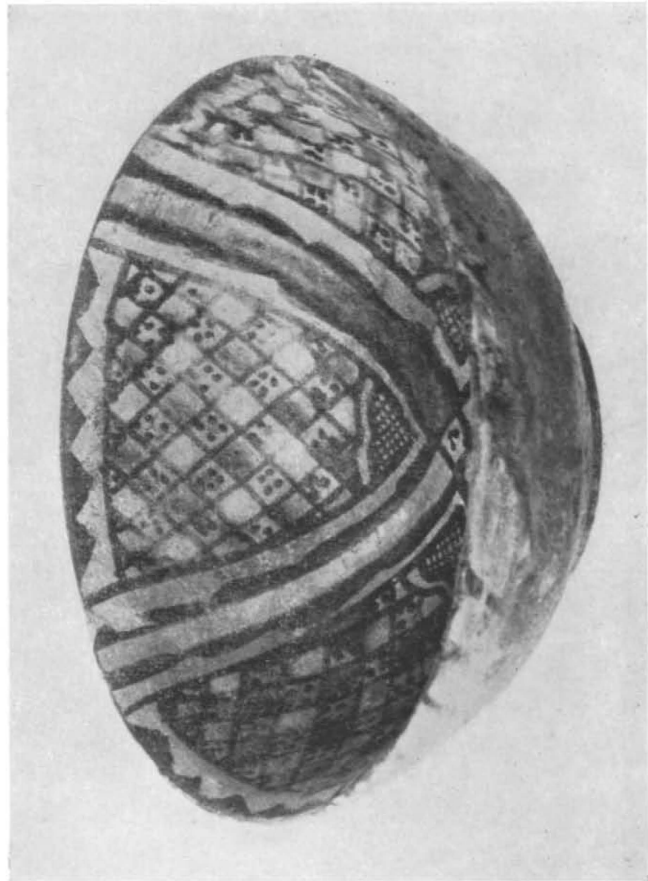
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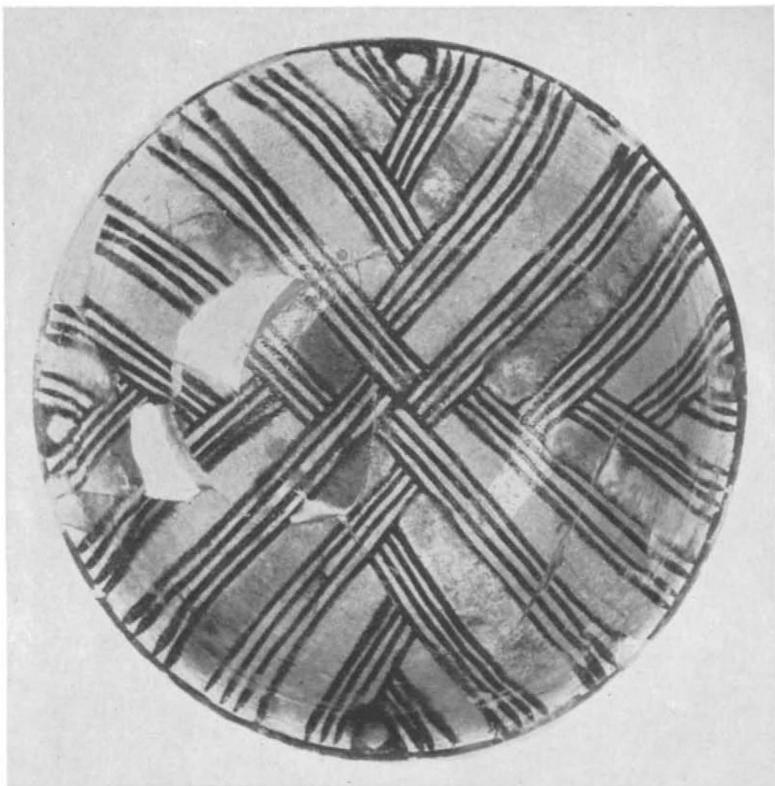
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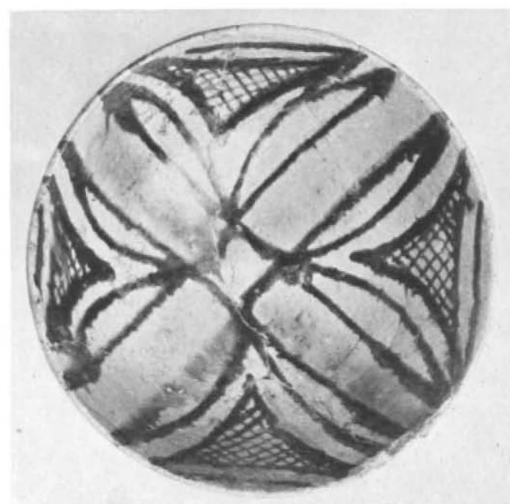
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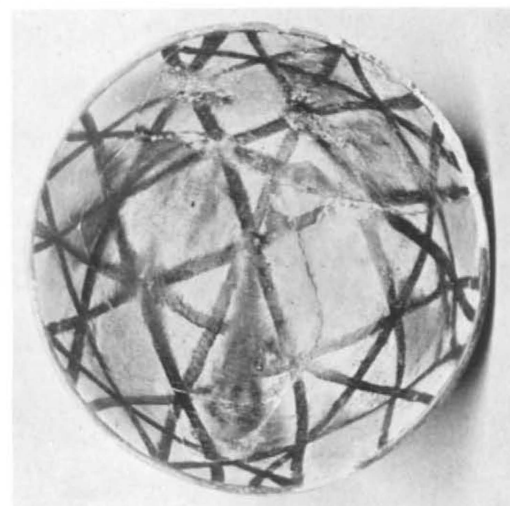
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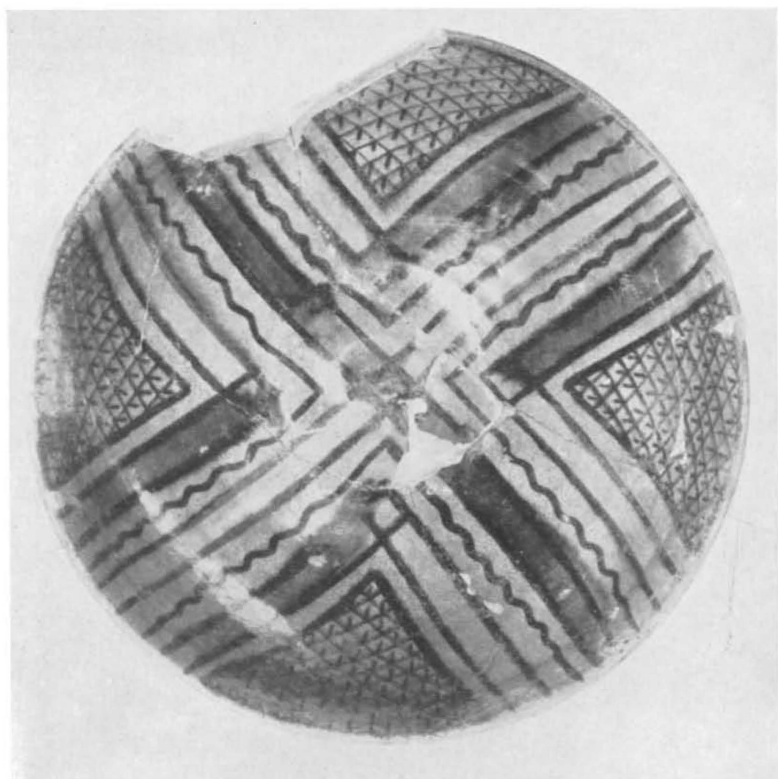
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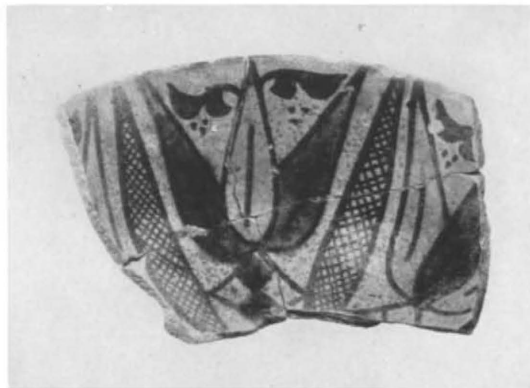


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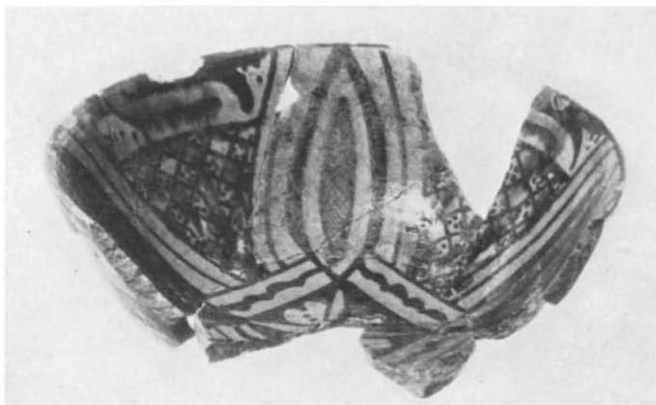
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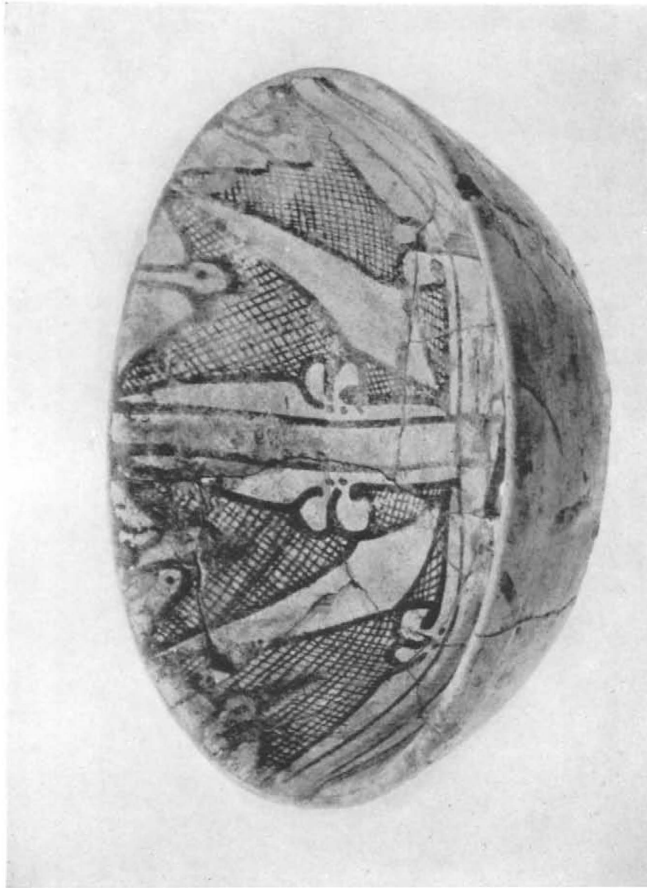




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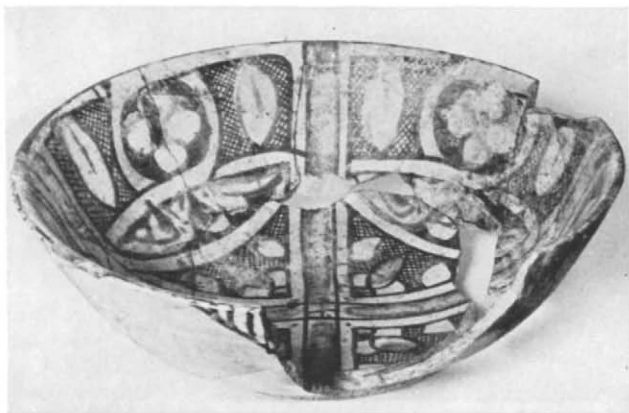
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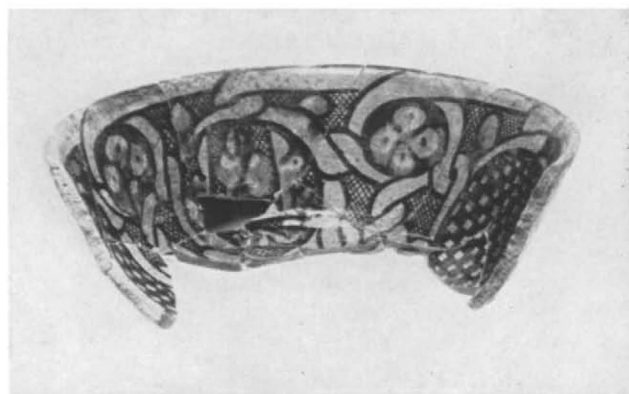
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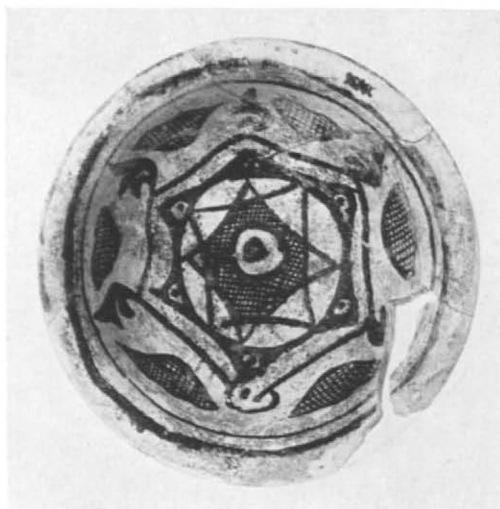
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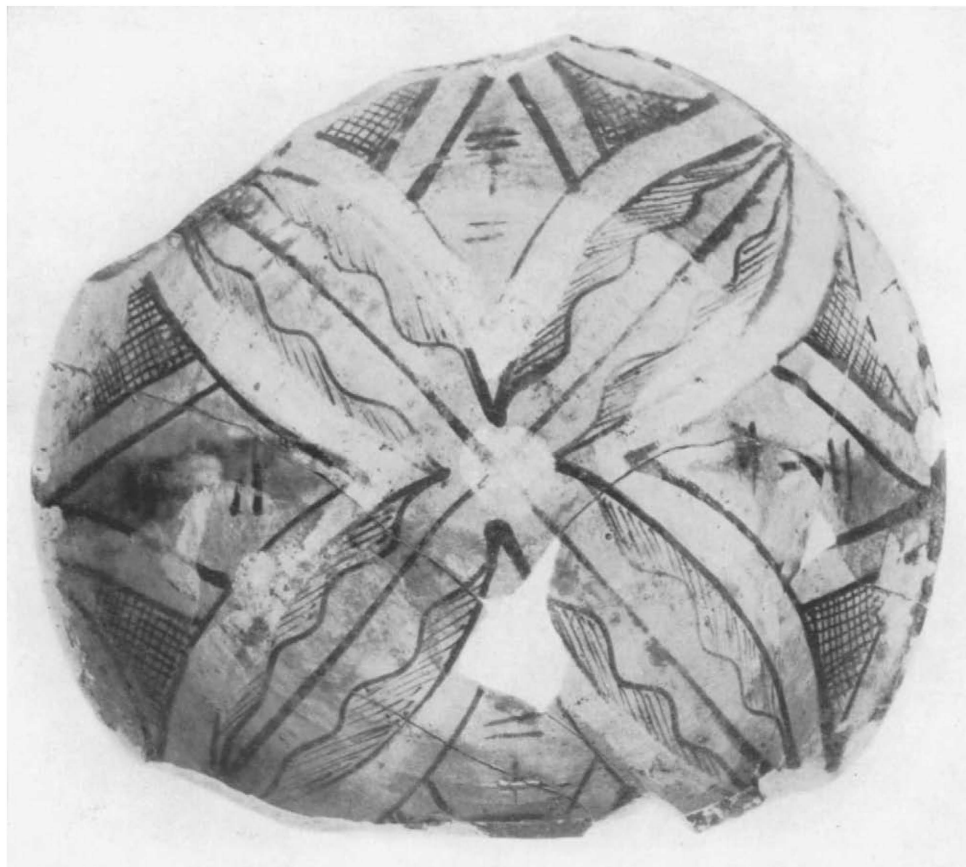
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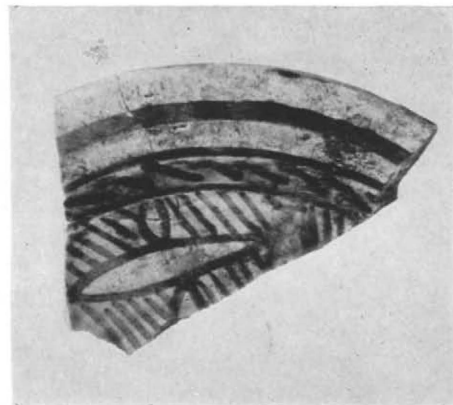
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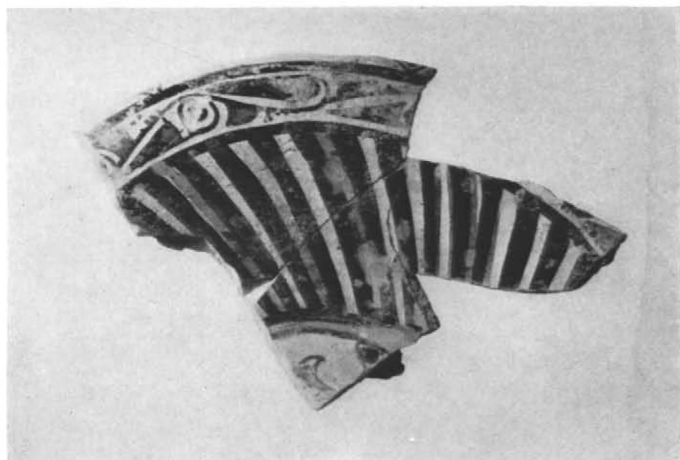


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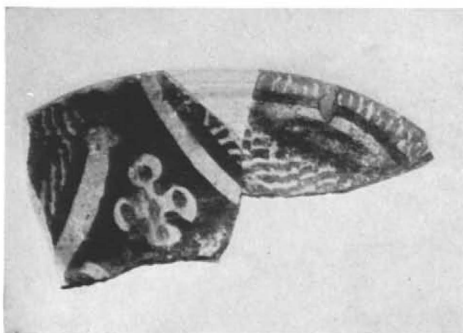
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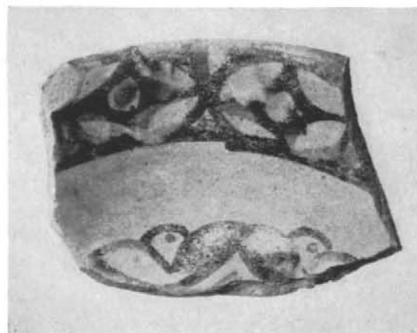
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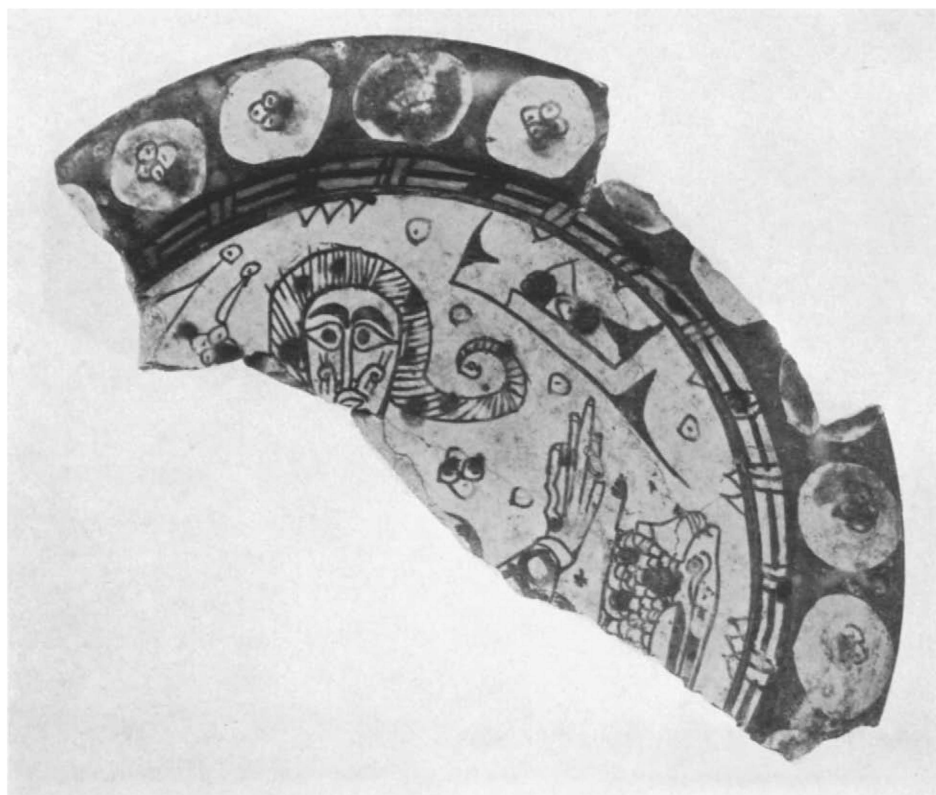


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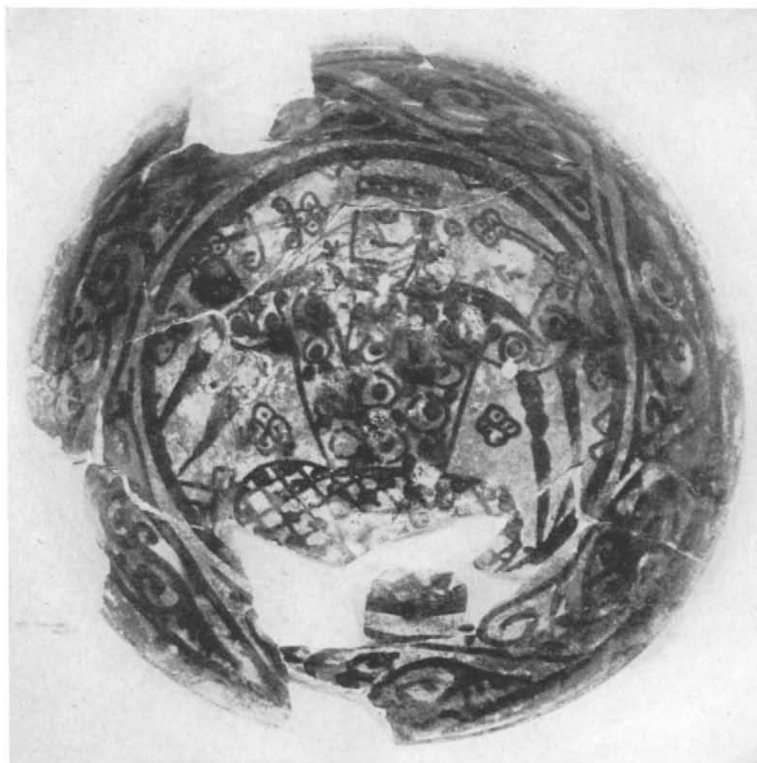
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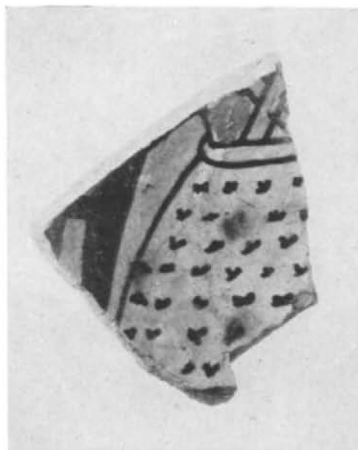
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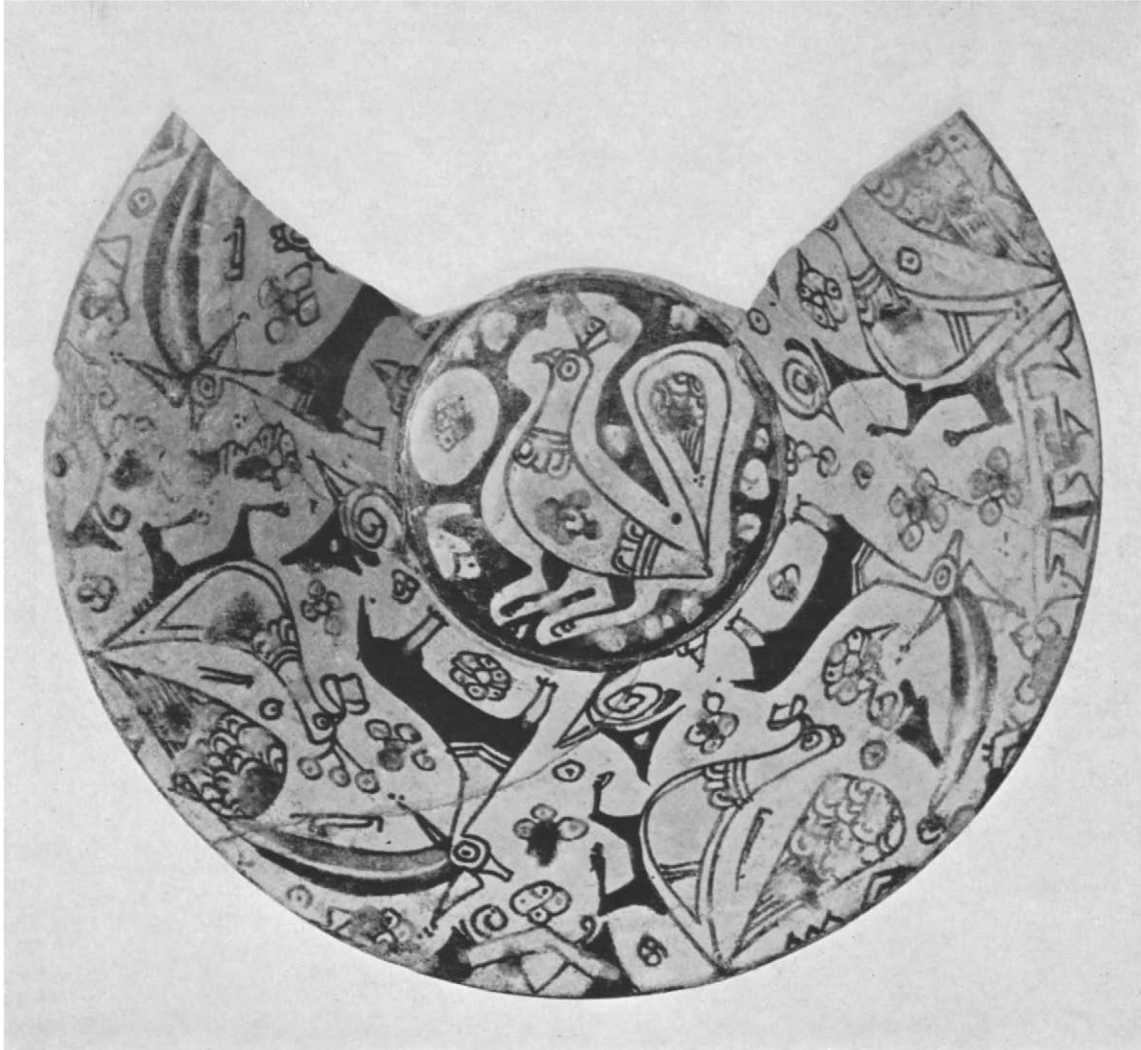
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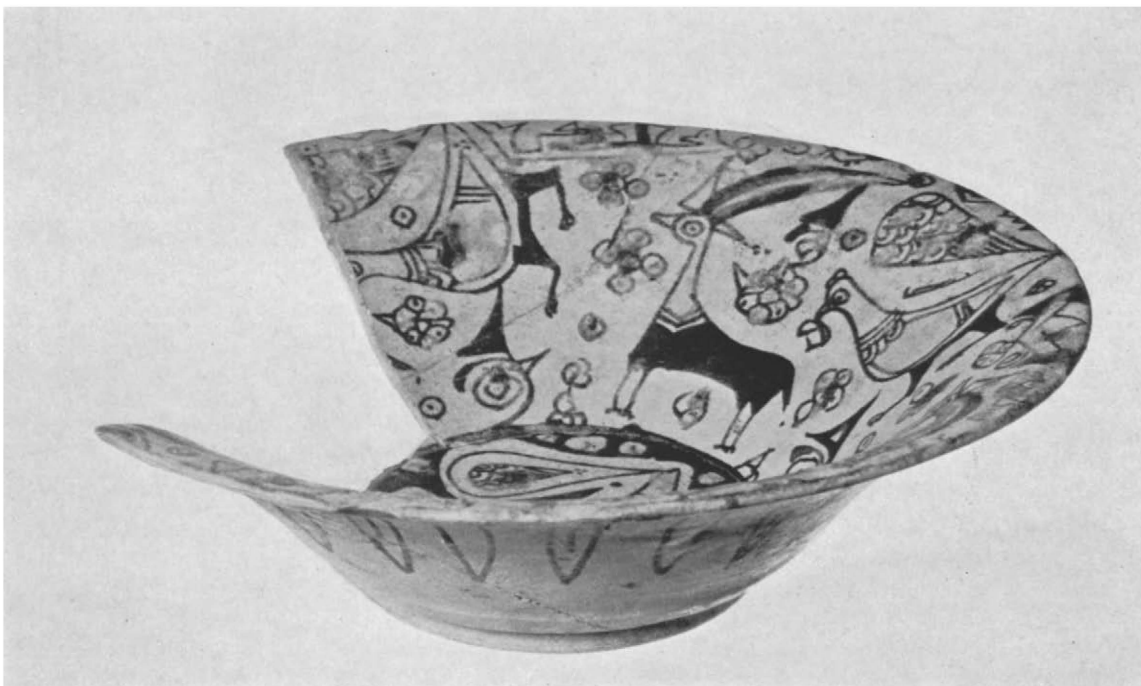


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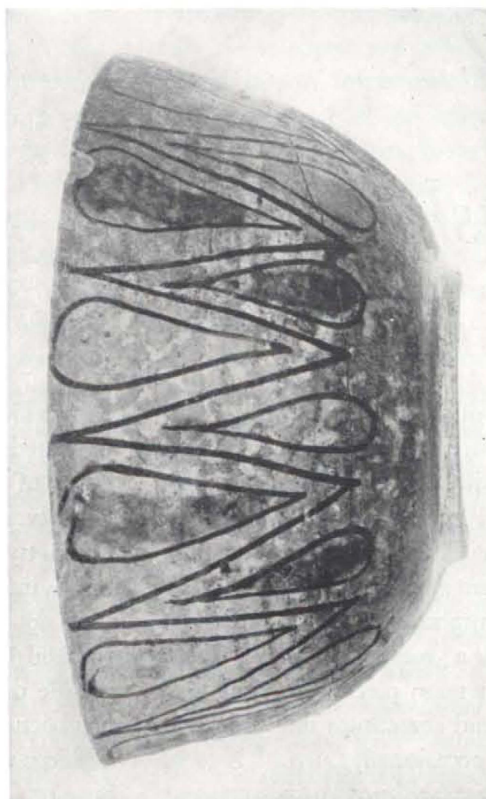
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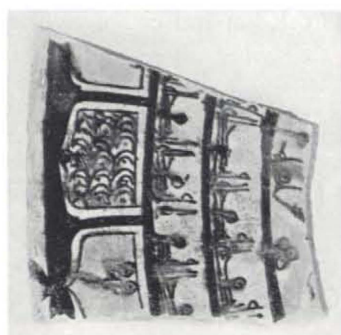
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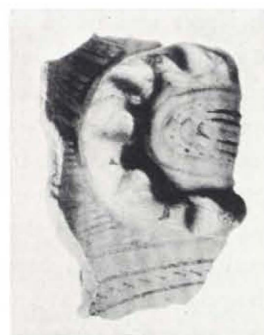
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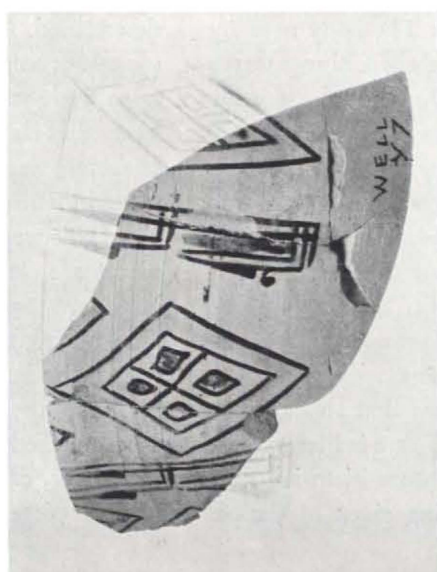
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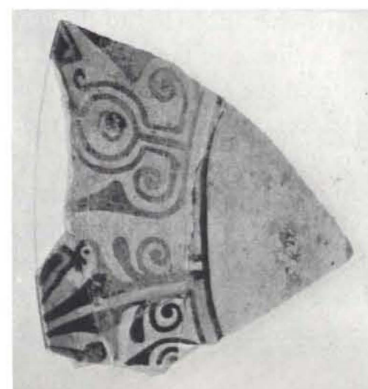
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2

Color-splashed Ware

One of the largest groups of glazed earthenware found at Nishapur was color-splashed ware, the pieces usually covered inside and outside with a white engobe and decorated with splashes of yellow, green, and a purplish brown sometimes so dark that it can better be described as purplish black. These colors were applied in dabs, spots, or streaks before the overall application of a transparent lead glaze that sometimes has a green tinge. Generally all three colors were used, but on many pieces only two were, usually yellow and green, and sometimes only one was applied, green in most cases, occasionally purplish brown.

It is convenient to divide this ware into two main groups: one in which the color splashes constitute the entire decoration, and another, much larger and made later, in which the colors supplement graffiato designs. Both varieties were made in vast number in Nishapur in the ninth and tenth centuries. The popularity of the ware was anything but local, however. Not only was it made in other centers in Iran, but in Transoxiana, Afghanistan, Iraq, eastern Arabia, Syria, and Egypt. Wasters of the ware, those sure indications of local manufacture, have been found as far east as Afrasiyab and as far west as Fustat.

Despite its great production and wide distribution in the Near East during the ninth century, the ware was not invented there. It was first produced in China, where it was made both as glazed earthenware and porcelaneous ware in the T'ang period (618–906). The body used by the Chinese, exemplified in the sherds of Chinese wares unearthed in Nishapur, was kaolin. Kaolin—the word is of Chinese origin—is a pure white clay derived from the decomposition of feldspar, which remains white even after being subjected to the heat of the kiln. Kaolin was not available to the potters of the Islamic world, so they imitated the Chinese body by covering their clay, which fired from yellowish buff to red, with an engobe of white slip. This provided the reflecting surface necessary to obtain proper quality of color in the transparent glaze.

It is possible that the Chinese ware first appeared in the Near East in the eighth century. There is literary evidence on this point: the eleventh-century historian Bai-haqi speaking of Chinese wares being given to Caliph

Harun al-Rashid (786–809). The particular types are not indicated beyond the statement that they included twenty pieces of *chini faghfuri* (fine porcelain), “the like of which had never been seen at a Caliph’s court before,” in addition to two thousand other pieces of porcelain (for sources of this information, see Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, p. 10). It is not unlikely that the Chinese color-splashed ware reached Iraq, the center of the Islamic world from the middle of the eighth century onward, even earlier than has been suggested here. Although no specimens of the Chinese ware have been found at Ctesiphon in Iraq or at Susa or Qasr-i-abu Nasr in Iran, all of which were in existence at the close of the Sasanian period, the finding of other Chinese wares such as celadon and creamy white porcelaneous ware suggests that when these and other transitional Sasanid-Islamic sites are examined further, the advent of the color-splashed ware may be dated earlier. The ninth-century date is certain, for fragments of the ware were found at Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pls. XXVI, XXVII no. 4, XXVIII, XXIX), and this city’s period of importance as the seat of the caliphate is bracketed by the years 836–892. Of course, however, Samarra did not die immediately.

Whether the Islamic imitations were first made in the eastern provinces nearest China—Transoxiana and Khurasan—or at the seat of the caliphate in Iraq is still undetermined. Geographical proximity to China need not suggest precedence, especially since Iraq, in the west, had a sea trade with the Orient at an early date. It is highly likely that the imitations of color-splashed ware made in Nishapur were inspired by the copies of Chinese pieces made in Kufa, Baghdad, and Samarra. The potting quality of this ware made in Iraq varies greatly. Many of the pieces are clumsy, but the best ones, in regard to their glaze, are superior to any that were made in Nishapur. One distinguishing feature of the early color-splashed ware made in Iraq is a raised ring defining the limit of the bottom of the bowl. This feature was copied in Nishapur—but in the buff ware, not the color-splashed.

The clay of the Nishapur ware ranges from buff to red. In most pieces the body is redder toward the center; in

others it is reddish throughout. The colors hardly differ from those of the other lead-glazed wares made in Nishapur, the buff ware, with its more consistently buff body, excepted. The clay, seldom well levigated, is not very smooth and shows small, irregular holes. Some of the ware was made without an engobe, and in this group the applied colors are rather unpleasantly brownish. In the bowls with engobe—the majority—the engobe is nearly always applied to the outside too, even when this surface is left undecorated, and often to the base as well. In contrast, the potters of Afrasiyab frequently left the exteriors of their color-splashed bowls with little or no engobe and glaze. Kurt Erdmann was in error when he described the exteriors of the Afrasiyab bowls as being covered with a "light brown slip" (Erdmann, *Bulletin of the Iranian Institute*, VI, p. 104); the light brown is the color of the body showing through the clear glaze.

When the glaze of the color-splashed bowls was thickly applied, it tended to flake off, the engobe having prevented it from truly penetrating the pores of the body. This same failing is found in the other Nishapur wares with white engobes: the black on white, the polychrome on white, and the ware with yellow-staining black. The flaking is not necessarily the result of long burial; experiments have shown that no great length of time is needed for it to occur. The metallic basis for the colors (which usually bear no resemblance to the ultimate colors) were probably dabbed on after the dried vessel was hardened in the sun. After this the glaze was applied, probably by pouring it from a dish (the method still practiced in Nishapur) rather than by dipping the vessel. When in good condition (as it is on 56, for example), the glaze often has the iridescence of a soap bubble. This condition, like the flaking of the glaze, is not a reliable sign of age, since it can sometimes be seen in freshly made pieces with a lead glaze. In some of the color-splashed ware the glaze, particularly on the exterior, has a frosty appearance, a condition resulting from insufficient application rather than from incorrect firing or subsequent deterioration. A comparable frostiness occurs in the color-splashed ware of Afrasiyab, where the condition seems to have been commoner than in Nishapur.

Two yellows are found in the color-splashed ware of Nishapur: a brownish yellow containing iron oxide (Color Plate 3, page xiv) and a greenish yellow containing chrome oxide. They do not occur together on any one piece. The glaze, tinted by these yellows, is often seen to be speckled with black, the result of an inadequate grinding of the metallic base. Yellow was widely used on Islamic pottery, especially in Iraq. Here it is of a more golden hue than either of the Nishapur yellows. Brownish yellow occurs on color-splashed vessels from Susa, some of which were probably imported from Iraq, and on the color-splashed

ware of Egypt. The greenish yellow was apparently used only in Nishapur and other pottery centers of Iran, although precise information on this point is still lacking.

The green of all the Islamic color-splashed ware was produced from copper. It varies in hue, depending on the amount used and on the thickness of the glaze. When thick, the glaze is often practically black. Blue, which appears as one of the colors of Chinese color-splashed ware, was not used on any Islamic color-splashed ware of the ninth and tenth centuries. Cobalt, the metallic base for blue in a lead glaze, seems not to have been employed in Nishapur until at least the beginning of the eleventh century. It was used in the ninth century in Iraq on opaque white-glazed ware, so its omission from the color scheme of the color-splashed ware (and likewise from the opaque white ware made in Nishapur) indicates either certain restrictions in use or lack of a convenient source. Cobalt was mined in the vicinity of Kashan, at no impractical distance from Nishapur, but just when the metal became available we do not know.

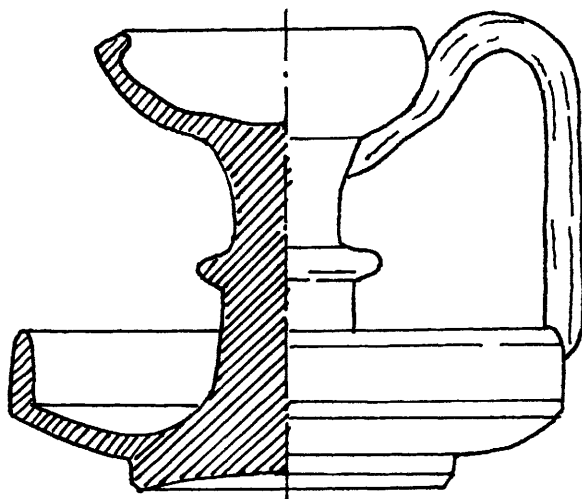
For firing, the color-splashed vessels made in Nishapur were sometimes stacked upright, sometimes upside down, and occasionally even on one side. In bowls fired upright the result is often disappointing, since if there is any considerable pooling of the glaze in the bottom, the colors tend to run together (Color Plate 4, page xv). The majority of bowls colored with greenish yellow were fired upright, the majority with brownish yellow, inverted. This suggests that they were made in different potteries. Many of the bowls show the circular marks of the three-pronged clay stilts that separated them, one from another, in the kiln. Some of the bowls have these marks on both bottom and base, the result of nesting. Although no kilns that produced this ware were found by the Museum's expedition, it is certain that they once existed, inasmuch as wasters were discovered (67).

The first of the two main groups of the ware—that without graffiato designs—may be divided into two subgroups, one in which the pieces are covered with engobe, one in which this refinement is absent. The shapes in these subgroups are not identical. The majority of the bowls with engobe, when small, have incurving rims (1, 4, 6). When large, they usually have widely flaring sides (8) that sometimes curve in at the rim (7). The bowls of the subgroup without engobe (9–11) are readily distinguished by their shape. The diameter is wide in relation to the height, the rim thick and rounded, and the base, abnormally wide, is made thin in comparison to the wall and finished without indication of a foot ring or even a groove. On these grounds, this particular subgroup, made in the ninth century, is perhaps the product of a single factory.

The graffiato decorations that characterize the larger

group of the color-splashed ware were made in a particular way in Nishapur. Elsewhere in the Islamic world the lines might be made in two ways: either drawn before the engobe was applied or scratched through the engobe. In the first method they are less prominent; in the second they turn almost black when covered with green glaze. Pre-engobe drawing was practiced in Iraq, and imported pieces so made have been found in both Susa and Nishapur, but the second method was the one most often employed in Nishapur itself.

Just as the shapes differ, there are differences in the decoration. That of the group with engobe is of two types, the more favored being rows of simple splashes of green and yellow, usually arranged neatly (4) but sometimes placed irregularly. The running of the color in the glaze often destroys an originally neat pattern (2). At times spots of one color (for example, sienna) are used for the interiors, with purplish brown spots confined to the exteriors; an example is mentioned at 2. Sometimes green spots alone appear on the white ground: this dabbed decoration, closely resembling that on imported Chinese pieces, was used by the potters of Nishapur not only on bowls of various sizes but on pitchers, large jars with from one to three handles (34), sweetmeat dishes composed of conjoined circular receptacles, covers (Group 9, 38), and lamps, with or without a central stem. The drawing is of an example with a stem. The less favored decoration in this group, which bears no resemblance to that of Chi-



1:2

nese pieces, consists of poorly drawn lobed shapes (5, 6), radial stripes with added dots (8), or irregular streakings. The decoration in the subgroup without engobe, bearing no resemblance to any on Chinese pieces, consists of radial stripes grouped in sectors, sectors filled with spots or strokes, colored "rays," and the like (7-12).

The typical Nishapur bowl with graffiato decoration has straight, flaring sides (13-26). The everted lip, com-

mon in this ware elsewhere, especially in Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pls. xxix, no. 2, xxx, no. 3), does not occur in the ware made in Nishapur. A second Nishapur shape, also common, has the flaring sides curving inward near the top (29, 48-51). This shape, which seems to be absent in the ware as made in Iraq and the rest of Iran, also occurs in the color-splashed ware of Syria. The shape itself occurs occasionally in three other wares of Nishapur: the buff (Group 1, 46), the black on white (Group 3, 62), and the ware with yellow-staining black (Group 8, 2).

It was with the introduction of graffiato decoration that the Islamic potter forgot any artistic ties he may have had with China and evolved patterns that had nothing to do with the Far East. In Nishapur the designs, often quite simple, were generally executed in a carefree way. On the other hand, many of the designs were drawn with precision, particularly in the framework, with elaboration occurring in the filling of selected compartments. Such well-drawn designs stand in contrast to the loose graffiato patterns typical of this ware as made in Iraq and found in such places as Samarra (*Excavations at Samarra, 1936-1939*, II, pl. lxxxI), Istakhr (Schmidt, *Oriental Institute Communications*, 21, 1939, p. 116, fig. 82), and Qasr-i-abu Nasr (unpublished). Whether simple or elaborate, the graffiato designs of Nishapur have little relation to the designs on other Nishapur pottery. Exceptions to this observation are a few pieces (29, 44) with counterparts in the buff ware.

Graffiato decoration, supplemented by colors, was applied to the interior of bowls with flaring sides, some of which have incurving rims, and to the exterior of deep bowls with nearly vertical sides. It was also applied to platters and less commonly to large jars, on which it took the form of bold, loose scribbles (37). The Nishapur potters did not bother to add graffiato patterns to their lamps and sweetmeat dishes, contenting themselves in these pieces (none illustrated) with simple splashes of color.

Often found are such simple basic patterns as radiating lines. In some bowls these lines take the form of a cross, the areas between the arms being filled with minor splashes of color. Such designs (14) may suggest that the bowls were manufactured for Christian patrons, but clear evidence of such an intention is lacking, in contrast to the case in other wares of Nishapur (Group 1, 48, 49; Group 12, 200). The radiating lines are sometimes increased in number to divide the bowl into narrower sectors, and these in turn may be divided horizontally to form quadrangular compartments (15). In other bowls the entire interior is filled with squares (13). Some bowls are decorated with radiating bands and irregular three-sided forms, usually crosshatched and dotted with purplish brown (18, 20). The designs of another group, very popular in Nisha-

pur, have circumscribing bands between which appear three-, four-, and five-sided compartments, usually filled with minor graffiato ornament (17, 19, 21, among many others). Some of these designs are dominated by biconvex forms (46, 47). In the bowls with designs based on radiating lines, spots of purplish brown are added in the areas filled with graffiato spirals or similar motifs (14, 15); in the bowls with bands of multisided compartments, the spots of purplish brown are placed in the areas that are free of graffiato (22).

In some pieces the graffiato pattern seems to be of primary importance—the white areas with their spots and splashes secondary (66), in others the color splashes dominate (44), and in some the two elements are equal in interest (46, 47, 51). Although compartments of one shape alone decorate certain pieces (26, 42), more often two shapes alternate (21). Whether because platters were made in a separate pottery, or because compartments shaped like pinecones were thought suitable only for platters, this particular shape, used as part of a large design, is found on such pieces only (32, 33).

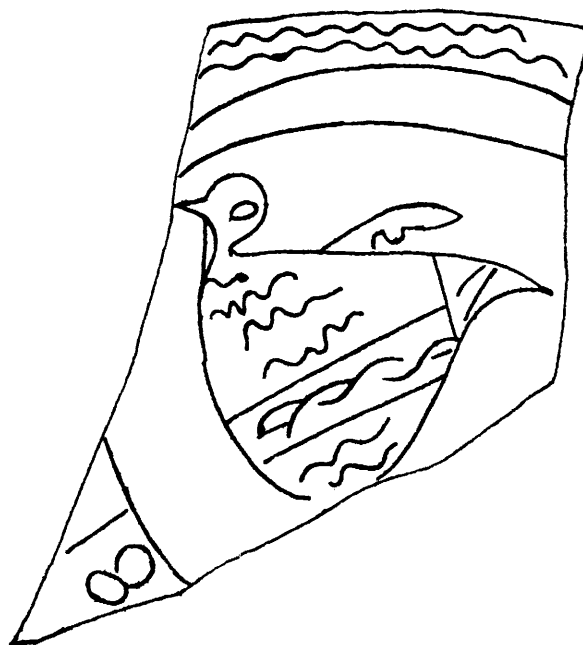
The graffiato filling of the various outlined compartments is of several distinct kinds. The most elementary, crosshatching, is generally found in the compartments of simply decorated bowls; it is also much used on the bottoms of bowls, where it is sometimes drawn in wavy lines (22). Another common filling is a scribbled spiral (30). Still another is a leafy form, usually drawn imprecisely (21–27, 48–50). The compartments on a few pieces are filled with carefully and delicately drawn leaflike forms (63, 66).

Study of the graffiato decorations leads one to see that certain of them are the work of a single potter (63, 66), while others are at least products of the same manufactory (30, 44, 47). Comparison of the Nishapur bowls with those from other sites reveals further information. For example, the sharply defined, downward-pointing compartments, so typical of Nishapur, do not appear in the comparable products of Rayy, Istakhr, Shiraz, or Iraq. On the other hand, certain decorations in the color-splashed ware made elsewhere in Iran and in Iraq do not occur in the Nishapur ware—or for that matter in the color-splashed ware of Afrasiyab. These include a band of large circles inscribed around the wall (57, 62, 65) and a rim decorated with parallel slanting lines (61, 64). Accordingly, the few pieces found with such decorations may be considered imports.

Despite the similarities in the color-splashed wares of Nishapur and Afrasiyab, seen especially in the shapes of the compartments and their leaflike fillings, there are notable differences. The filling of compartments with single hatching or a scalelike treatment connotes Afrasiyab (Erdmann, *Faenza*, XXV, pl. xxiva; Erdmann, *Bulletin of the*

Iranian Institute, VI, p. 103, fig. 2), and most of the bowls found in Nishapur with scalelike fillings (43, 59) were probably imported from Afrasiyab. A graffiato cable pattern at the rim (25) is another characteristic decoration of Afrasiyab. It may also be noted that the color-splashed ware of Nishapur is often superior to that of Afrasiyab in the quality of potting and glazing.

Still another indication of manufacture elsewhere than Nishapur is lines of painted dotting in purplish black, supplementing the graffiato decoration. Only a fragment of such a piece was found and is in the Metropolitan (40.170.478). This dotting seems to be characteristic of some of the color-splashed ware of Jovain, a site supposedly much dug for commerce in recent years, and productive of pottery similar to that of Nishapur. It also occurs in the color-splashed ware of Gurgan (Metropolitan's sherd collection) and Qalat-i-Jamshid (Stein, *Archaeological Reconnaissances*, pl. iv, Jam. surf. 23). In addition, it occurs in color-splashed ware found in the Islamic ruins of Babylon (Wetzel, Schmidt & Mallurtz, *Das Babylon der Spätzeit*, pl. 49, no. 9) and in Fustat (Bahgat & Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, pl. XLVIII, no. 4). It is curious that so widespread a fashion should not have taken hold in either Nishapur or Afrasiyab, but the potters of the graffiato color-splashed ware in these two cities were evidently sufficient unto themselves. Certain types may be noted as completely absent from the color-splashed production of Nishapur. For example, no echo was found of a type of bird that figured in the decoration of this ware in Fars. The drawing is of a fragment having such a decoration, excavated at Qasr-i-abu Nasr, near Shiraz. With the adoption of a new technique in Nishapur, at



east by the beginning of the twelfth century—that of, covering a gritty white body, composed mostly of quartz, with an alkaline glaze—local interest in color-splashed wares seems to have faded away. In the ninth and tenth centuries, wherever made, color-splashed ware was produced with a fair degree of homogeneity; but in the later periods the differences between the work at Nishapur and elsewhere became greater. Furthermore, importations, which had occasionally taken place (57, 60, 61, 64, 65), seem to have ceased. Despite the considerable merits of the color-splashed wares of Yasukand and the Garrus district near Hamadan, where the graffiato technique was further developed, none seem to have found their way to Nishapur. It is also to be noted that none were found in which the chief decoration consists of a Kufic inscription on the wall of the bowl and interlaced bands on the bottom with a background of simple hatching, such as have

been found at Qalat-i-Jamshid in the Makran in south Iran (Stein, *Archaeological Reconnaissances*, pl. IV). It is perhaps noteworthy that all these areas did not specialize in alkaline-glazed wares, whereas Nishapur, in the earliest days of its manufacture, was one of the principal producers. In any case, despite the fact that Nishapur was a prosperous and wealthy city in the eleventh century and for a good part of the following century, it imported none of these wares despite, to our eyes, their artistic worthiness. Thus, while lead-glazed wares with a white engobe and colored embellishments achieved a new boldness in technique and design elsewhere, with the color applied precisely between the scratchings or over larger areas from which the engobe had been removed, such did not happen in Nishapur, where the ware died out with splashes and dripples applied over meaningless scribbles.

1 DISH

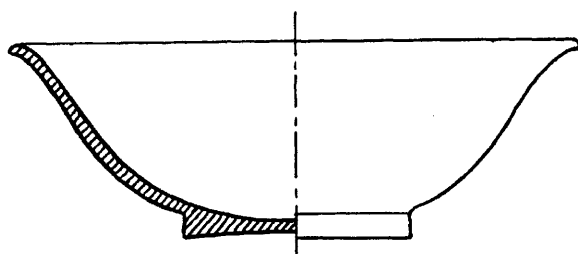
D 11, H 4.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Poorly turned, with thick wall. Incurved rim. Glaze splashed with green and yellow. Such dishes, with blobs of color run together in the firing, were made in great number in Nishapur and elsewhere. The characteristic wall and rim are seen again in 3–6.

2 BOWL

D 9.3, H 5.4 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Glaze splashed with brownish yellow and green. Small, deep bowls such as this, with outcurving rims, were far less common in Nishapur than the shallower kind represented by 1, 3–6. The drawing is of one with a more grace-



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ful shape, decorated solely with color splashes (in this particular bowl sienna splashes inside, purplish brown splashes outside).

3 FUNNEL

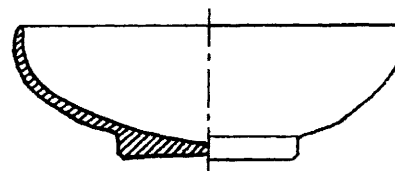
D 9.6, H 3.5 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Thick wall, incurved rim. Splashes of green and yellow. Objects of this shape and with a similar slit in the center have also been found in the Parthian site of Seleucia in Iraq (Debevoise, *Parthian Pottery*, figs. 27–30, 35). It has been suggested that they were jar covers, with the slit made for the insertion of a string handle, but it is far more probable that in both Parthian and Islamic times such pieces served as funnels. Many pottery covers were found in Nishapur, and all, whether with concave or convex top, had a knob, obviously a simpler and more durable lifting device than a string.

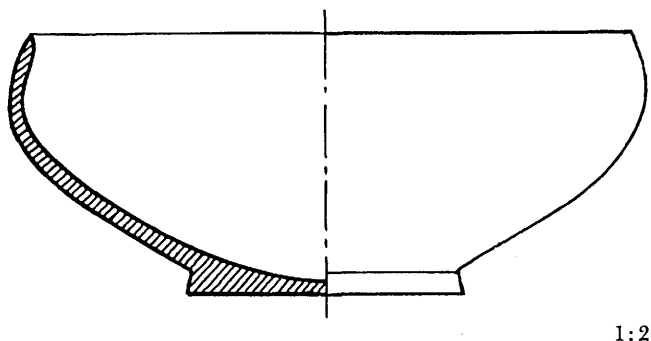
4 DISH (minor restoration)

D 9.8, H 4 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.41

Thick wall, incurved rim, decoration of spots, green and sienna yellow in alternate rings. The exterior, covered with engobe, is glazed but undecorated. This was a common shape; the first drawing is of an example from Sabz



1:2



1:2

Pushan. Bowls of larger size often had added graffiato decoration; the second drawing is of a bowl also from Sabz Pushan.

5 DISH

D 13, H 5.3 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.117

Poorly turned, with thick wall. Incurved rim. Decoration: four lobes left white, each containing a spot of purplish black. The lobes are outlined in dark green; the rest of the interior is brownish yellow. Near the rim on the exterior, blobs of yellow and green. The glaze is greenish; on the exterior, where it was thinly applied, it has a frosty appearance. A similar dish from Nishapur in the Metropolitan (40.170.111) is decorated with three lobes, each containing a brownish yellow spot.

6 DISH

D 13.2, H 4.5 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 40.170.95

Poorly turned, with thin walls. Incurved rim. Decoration: a roughly drawn pattern in green with splashes of greenish yellow. Similar pieces were found with splashes of brownish yellow.

7 BOWL

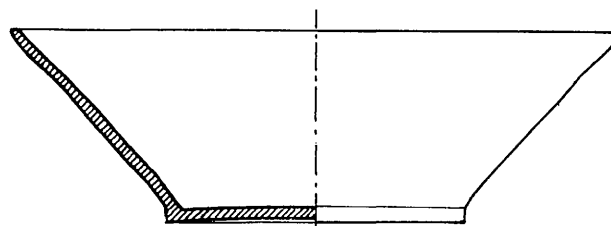
D 20, H 3.4 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 40.170.161

Pinkish buff body, off-white engobe, decoration in green only, so loosely drawn that it appears to consist of haphazard scribbles and spots. Contrary to custom in Nishapur, the engobe on the exterior is present only near the rim, which is incurved. Although this restriction of the engobe was common in Afrasiyab, on such a poorly made piece as this it can hardly be considered a sure sign of importation. Only the colored parts of such bowls are glazed; the rest of the surface is mat white. Spots of dull purple were added to the green in some examples. A similar bowl is in the Teheran museum.

8 BOWL (restored)

D 24.5, H 7.6 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 37.40.17

Widely flaring sides. The design, painted in greenish yellow, is composed essentially of eight sectors that are converted, by the alternation of two different motifs within them, into two crosses. The pigment is filled with minute black specks, the result of insufficient grinding of the chrome base. The spots filling the blank spaces are purplish. The entire exterior, including the slightly concave



1:3

base, is covered with engobe, but the glaze, rough in texture, extends only about three-quarters of the way to the base. The exterior is undecorated. For further instances of the cross design, see 14, 15.

9 BOWL

D 19.2, H 6.4 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

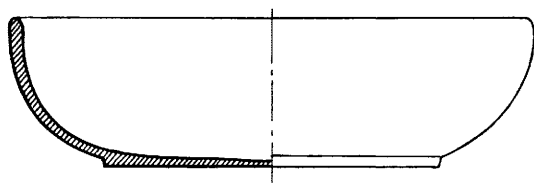
Grayish buff body, no engobe. Three groups of purplish black radial stripes alternate with three groups of strong green stripes, all of them continuing over the rim. Centered on the bottom is a large purplish spot. In similar bowls this spot is sometimes green. The base of 9, low and flat, is much wider than it is in comparable vessels that have an engobe. Ninth century. For an example of this type of decoration on a better-potted bowl, made in Iraq, with five groups of light and five groups of dark stripes see Lane, *Hitchcock Collection*, pl. 8.

10 BOWL

D 21, H 6.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.31

No engobe. Design of five sectors filled with short strokes of purplish black alternating with five "rays" colored green. The glaze on the bottom has disintegrated. The exterior is glazed, including the low, wide, somewhat uneven base. No decoration on the exterior. Ninth century. For a related piece, see 68. For an apparent elaboration of this pattern in a bowl attributed to Iraq, in which seven "rays" alternate with sectors filled with spots, see Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 570.

- 11 BOWL (some restoration)
D 20.9, H 6.1 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 36.20.26



1:3

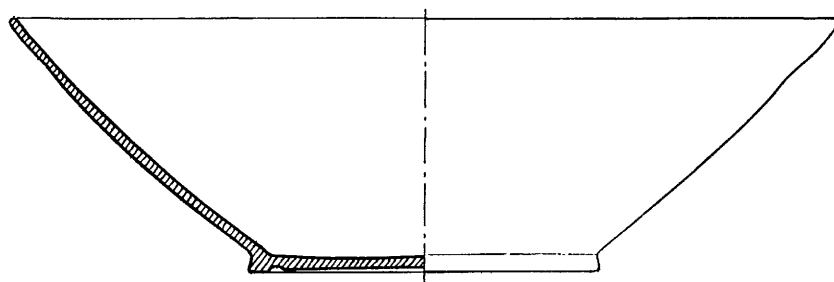
No engobe. Decoration: a cross formed of radial bands outlined in purplish black. Three green spots in each of the quadrants ran in the firing. Other applications of green complete the color scheme. The base—low, wide, and flat—is glazed. This type of design seems to carry over into the opaque white ware (Group 6, 23).

- 12 JAR FRAGMENT
W 21.2, H 13.2 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.539

A portion of this fragment is in the Teheran museum. No engobe. Part of a deep vessel that was furnished with small horizontal lugs. One is visible in the illustration. Though small, these were sufficient to be of assistance in lifting the vessel. Near the rim a circumscribing ridge is flanked by two grooves. The darkest splashes have a purple tinge, the lightest, yellow. The interior is undecorated save for a purplish streak near the rim. Early ninth century.

- 13 BOWL
D 25, H 5.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Flaring sides. Decoration of graffiato squares outlined in green. Half of the squares, incised with curls, are dotted with purplish brown; the other half are colored greenish yellow. Fired inverted, as were many bowls with graffiato decoration in generally similar style (14–20). In some related bowls spots of color appear in all the squares, in others the pattern is broken by four white bands crossing the bowl at right angles. The drawing shows a typical, very common profile:

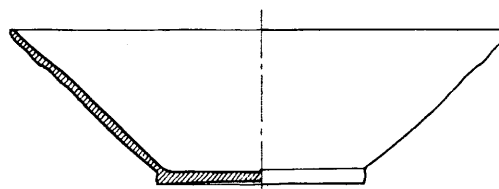


1:3

The decoration with squares is not peculiar to Nishapur; it occurs on bowls of the ninth century found in Egypt (Butler, *Islamic Pottery*, pl. xxxiii B). An example from Iraq is in the Metropolitan (52.114; *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, May, 1968, p. 361, fig. 3).

- 14 BOWL
D 22.3, H 6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.144

Widely flared sides. Base, slightly concave, is covered with engobe but is unglazed. Exterior is decorated with two pairs of purplish spots; glaze on exterior has a frosty appearance. Interior decoration: two crosses, the more prominent one composed of green outlines and crosshatching with purple spots applied over graffiato curls, the other having greenish yellow arms. Fired inverted. Many bowls of this type were found. Some have a graffiato rather than a painted crosshatch, and the colors are sometimes transposed. The purplish spots on the interior are a constant feature; those on the exterior are not. The drawing is of an example with graffiato crosshatch from the Village



1:3

Tepe (MMA 37.40.12); for an illustration, see Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, October, 1937, section II, p. 18, fig. 25.

- 15 BOWL
D 29.3, H 9 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.139

Decoration combines elements of the two preceding vessels: green-outlined rectangles, half of them filled with graffiato curls and purplish brown spots, the other half colored greenish yellow (compare 13), contained within eight radial sectors that start at the center forming two

crosses (compare 14). Wavy graffiato lines define the sectors. The exterior is undecorated. The base, beveled near the edge, is covered with engobe but is not glazed. Fired inverted. In some related bowls the sectors forming one of the crosses are left undecorated.

16 BOWL

D 26, H 8.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Thinly turned. Glaze of good quality, almost colorless. Decoration divided into fourteen sectors, seven filled with graffiato crosshatching and colored green, the alternate seven left white. The graffiato lines that define the sectors are wavy (compare 15). The rim is dark green. The exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is undecorated. Fired inverted. This simple color scheme was not common in Nishapur on such large bowls.

17 BOWL

D 32.8, H 11.6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Graffiato crosshatched radial bands and crosshatched triangular forms alternating, the spaces between them filled with broad strokes of brownish yellow. On the bottom, a crosshatched circle. Fired inverted. Found with 20. This design appears to have been popular, since a number of small bowls and dishes so decorated were found—for example, 56 (Color Plate 3, page xiv). In some cases the bottom is adorned with a square rather than a circle.

19 BOWL

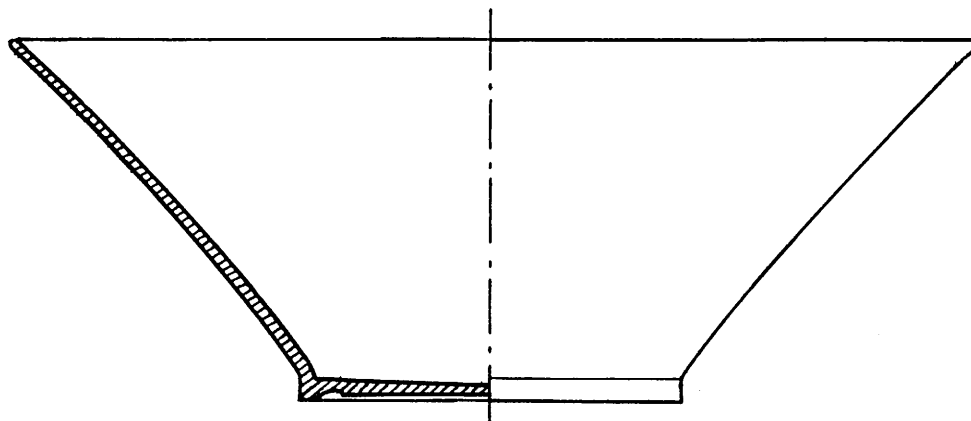
D 33, H 10 cm ; Vineyard Tepe
MIB

Simple graffiato decoration of biconvex forms alternating with spot-filled triangles and lozenges, a spot-filled circle on the bottom, separated from the wall decoration by a white band. Exterior undecorated. Fired inverted. Many bowls of this large size, or fragments of them, were found with similar decoration. Usually not carefully potted. Their colors, when the glaze is well preserved, are often brilliant. In some cases the white band near the bottom is absent, and in place of the circle seen here there may be three short radial bands filled with a graffiato crosshatch peppered with purplish spots.

20 BOWL

D 33, H 8.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.132

Decoration of radial and curved bands containing broad strokes of color, the triangular spaces between them filled with graffiato crosshatching and spots of purplish brown. On the bottom, a crosshatched color-spotted square. Greenish glaze. On the exterior the engobe extends to the base, but the glaze descends only about halfway. There is a deep groove near the edge of the base. Fired inverted. Several bowls with this decoration were found and many of this shape. The drawing is of an example from Sabz Pushan in the Metropolitan (36.20.53):



1:3

18 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 25.8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

A cross of broad radial bands, the spaces between them filled with graffiato crosshatching in simple shapes with spots of color added. Fired inverted.

21 BOWL

D 33, H 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170 18

Graffiato decoration of four-sided and five-sided compartments, doubly outlined and filled with foliate forms, alternating in a band around the wall. At the rim, a line of

scallops, doubly outlined and filled with short, curved strokes. On the bottom, a crosshatched circle. Color scheme: streaks of green and brownish yellow, spots of purplish black; on the exterior, alternate streaks of green and yellow. Fired upright. Probably tenth century.

The foliate forms in the compartments, the brownish rather than greenish yellow, and the firing in upright position set this bowl and others (22–27, 40–44) apart from those decorated with simple crosshatching. In view of these differences, the two groups of bowls doubtless came from two different factories. However, so far as can be ascertained, both groups were made in Nishapur.

The scallops at the rim of 21 appear as the rim decoration on a bowl of different shape (49), and, arranged in concentric circles, they constitute almost the entire decoration of a large circular platter (not illustrated) in the Teheran museum. Slight peculiarities in the drawing indicate that all three of these pieces were made by the same potter. For the use of graffiato scallops as decoration on the exterior of a bowl with nearly vertical sides, see 53.

22 BOWL

D 33, H 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.35

On the wall, graffiato compartments in two registers. Those of the upper register are unusual in that their flat base has a lateral projection ending in a flowerlike form. The compartments in the lower registers are like those of 21. The triple spots in the white areas on the wall are purplish brown. The bottom, crosshatched with wavy lines, is spotted with green and brownish yellow. Stilt marks are present. The exterior is streaked with green and yellow, a characteristic treatment. The base, slightly concave, is partly covered with engobe and glaze. Stilt marks also present here. Fired upright. The location, a low-level latrine pit, indicates ninth century. The net of wavy lines on the bottom of 22 is a feature to be seen in the glazed wares of Afrasiyab. A portion of a Nishapur platter in the Metropolitan (study fragment) shows a variation of the compartments in the upper register, the lateral projection consisting of a lozenge-shaped leaf. A further uncommon detail in this fragment is a graffiato lozenge, divided into four smaller ones, beneath the groups of triple spots on the wall.

23 BOWL

D 34.3, H 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.34

Large vessels in this ware are often poorly turned, hence, like this one, irregular in shape. Decoration: graffiato compartments in two registers, with two shapes—one triangular, one five-sided—used alternately. All are filled with foliate forms (compare 21, 22). The bottom is cross-

hatched and spotted with green and greenish yellow. The base, concave, has streaks of glaze. Fired upright. Found with 22. Ninth century.

24 BOWL

D 33, H 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.30

Graffiato compartments in two registers, four-sided alternating with five-sided, filled with foliate forms. The potter, finding himself short of space as he worked around the lower register, substituted a small triangular form filled with scalelike strokes (right of center in illustration) to complete his circle. The bottom, crosshatched and spotted with yellow and green, is partly covered with dark green glaze from the walls. Stilt marks present. The exterior is colored in the usual way with strokes of yellow and green. The base, slightly concave, is irregularly streaked with engobe and glaze. Fired upright.

25 BOWL

D 31.6, H 8.7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

In poor condition, the glaze spalled and eroded. Triangular and five-sided compartments, filled with loosely drawn foliate forms, alternate around the wall. The bottom is crosshatched and dotted with colors. At the rim is a cable design. Fired upright. Found with 22. Ninth century.

The cable design, not characteristic of Nishapur graffiato bowls, is seen in the graffiato ware of Afrasiyab. In Nishapur the design occurs most frequently in the polychrome on white ware as a decoration on the exterior (Group 4, 20). It is also found in the blue-glazed alkaline ware, Group 11, either painted (23) or mold-made (10).

26 BOWL

D 35, H 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Two registers of triangular compartments filled with floral forms. A trilobed graffiato "bud" has been introduced in the center of each white space; unlike the added motif in the upper register of 22, this bud is not connected by a stem to an adjoining compartment. A purplish black spot obscures many of the buds. The bottom, crosshatched with wavy lines, is color spotted. The exterior is streaked with yellow and green in the usual manner. Fired upright. Found in a ninth-century sinkaway. In a related example (Teheran museum) the triangular compartments are extended by a "leaf" curving to the left, producing a plant-like form.

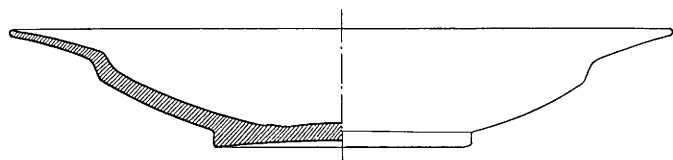
27 a,b BOWL

D 35, H 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

In poor condition, both the glaze and the graffiato decoration eroded. Another variation in the compartments that adorn so many of the color-splashed bowls of Nishapur. Here the alternate compartments have downward-pointing additions that make them resemble typical Islamic candlesticks. The bottom is crosshatched with wavy lines. The dark spots of color are purplish black, the lighter ones brownish yellow or green. The streaks on the exterior (27b) are alternately brownish yellow and green. Fired upright. Found with 26; ninth century. Whether the compartments' resemblance to candlesticks is intended is uncertain. At a much later period the candlestick motif was traditional in Soumak rugs of the Caucasus, but its appearance as a decoration in Nishapur pottery was rare indeed.

28 a,b PLATTER

D 34.5, H 6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.17



1:4

The triangular graffiato compartments around the broad rim, the four-sided ones around the well, and the cross-hatched circle in the center are similar to those of preceding pieces (23–25). The groups of purplish black spots that once were present in the white spaces have disintegrated or fallen off, leaving only traces, an uncommon occurrence. On the exterior, beneath the broad rim, are strokes of green and yellow. The base, concave, has a few streaks of engobe and is partly glazed. Fired upright. Large platters of this shape were not rare in Nishapur.

29 BOWL

D 27.2, H 11 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Flaring sides, curved in near the top—a common shape in this ware in Nishapur (31, 48–51) and elsewhere. Graffiato decoration of four radial semifoliate forms, each giving off subsidiary leaflike shapes to occupy the intermediate spaces. The background is filled with imprecise curls. Fired upright. This is one of the few large color-splashed bowls (44 is another) that show any relation, through their graffiato decoration, to the Nishapur buff ware; for the buff ware versions, see Group 1, 41–43. The influence operated in one direction only, for there is no evidence that the typical designs of the present ware were painted on the buff ware.

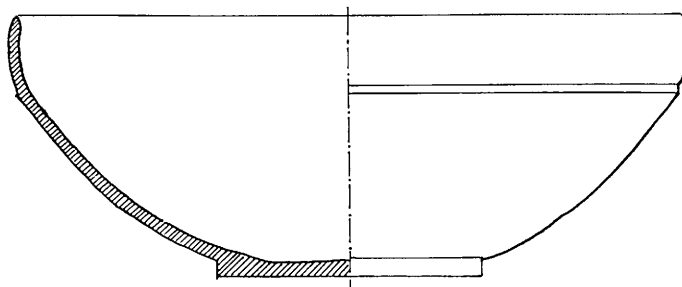
30 PLATTER

D 25.5, H 4.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.14

The vertical wall of the central depression is similar in shape to the walls of platters made in the black on white ware. Graffiato decoration based on biconvex forms arranged in groups of four, enclosing quadrilateral forms in the center and triangular forms at the edge, these forms filled with spiral scribbles. Fired inverted. Similarities in the drawing and firing show that 30, 44, and 47 were made in the same factory. Still another color-splashed vessel from this factory, not illustrated, is in the Metropolitan (40.170.104).

31 BOWL

D 35, H 14 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 40.170.68



1:4

With flaring sides and nearly vertical rim rising from a little ridge on the exterior, one of the largest color-splashed graffiato bowls of this shape found. The ridge, uncommon in this ware, occurs on polychrome on white bowls (Group 4, 52–54) and monochrome glazed bowls (Group 9, 33). Apparently not a feature of any Nishapur pottery before the tenth century, it became quite common in later wares. Decoration: at the top of the wall a row of double-outlined four-sided graffiato compartments filled with the usual roughly drawn leafy forms; the space beneath this filled with quadrilateral compartments with curved sides; a purplish black spot in each white space between the compartments. Fired inverted. The exterior, somewhat chattered, is covered with engobe and glaze. The base, slightly concave, has no engobe but is glazed.

32 PLATTER

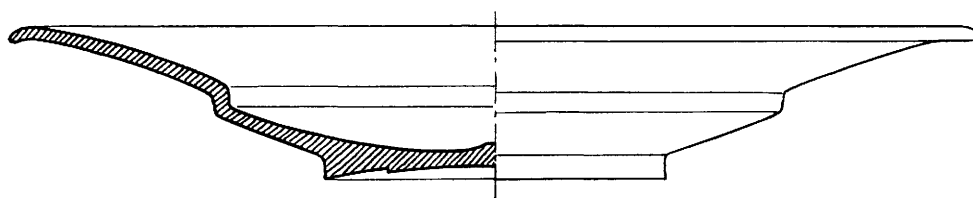
D 34.6, H 5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Graffiato forms resembling pinecones are introduced at the rim; such forms are seen in this ware only on platters (see also 33). The pinecones and other outlined areas are filled with spiral scribbles rather than the usual foliate forms. Colors: strong green and brownish yellow. Fired inverted.

33 PLATTER (restored)

D 38, H 5.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MMA 38.40.129



1:3

Graffiato decoration of pinecone forms (see comment at 32) and other outlined areas, filled either with crosshatching or spiral scribbles. Colors: strong green and brownish yellow. Fired inverted. The underside of the broad rim is streaked with green. The base, concave with a bevel near the edge, is glazed.

tion consists of scribbles and some large forms loosely outlined in green.

34 THREE-HANDLED JAR

H 28.5, D 23.7 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MMA 39.40.115

A portion of this jar is in the Teheran museum. The interior is partly glazed. Grooves circumscribe the vessel at the shoulder and at the upper attachment of the handle. Whitish engobe. Spots and streaks of brownish black and green; in several places the colors have run together.

38 COVER

D 23 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MIB

The graffiato scribbles have been made, as usual, with a sharp point. In addition, a circumscribing wavy band has been made with a blunt point. The colors—green, yellow, and purplish brown—leave little of the engobe exposed. The cover's knob is missing.

35 TWO-HANDLED JAR

H 23, D 19.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

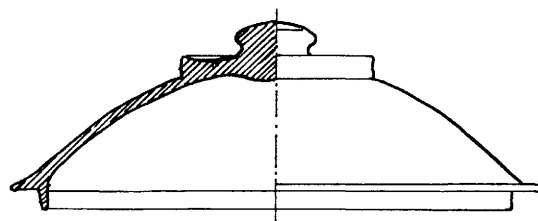
MIB

Neck divided into three zones by circumscribing grooves. Lip projects. Base has well-defined foot. Spots of brownish yellow and dark green. Stacked at a slant in the kiln.

39 COVER

D 20.6 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan

MIB



1:3

36 ONE-HANDLED JAR

H 26 D 19.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MMA study fragment

A portion of this jar is in the Teheran museum. Red body. Because no engobe was applied, the vessel has a brownish appearance. Circumscribing lines at the shoulder and collar. Splashes of green and brownish yellow. Interior glazed. Glazed one-handed jars were uncommon in Nishapur.

One of several similar covers. Their decoration of cross-hatched triangles is reminiscent of such bowls as 17 and 19.

37 JAR FRAGMENT

D 26 cm ; Qanat Tepe

MIB

Large jars such as this, having both engobe and graffiato decoration, were rare, and no complete specimen was found. The brilliant colors on this example are brownish black, green, and greenish yellow. The graffiato decora-

40 BOWL

D 20.5, H 5.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown

MIB

Around the wall, doubly outlined graffiato compartments, five-sided ones filled with the usual foliate forms alternating with triangular ones filled with small scales. The bottom is crosshatched. Colors: green, brownish yellow, purplish brown. Streaks of all three appear in sequence on the exterior. Fired upright. The foliate forms, the brownish yellow, and the upright firing link this bowl and the next three with 21–27. The scale motif in the triangles of 40, not found as often as plantlike forms, crosshatching, or scribbles, occurs frequently in the pottery of Afrasiyab;

40 would thus seem to be an import. It is not impossible that the Nishapur potters occasionally produced a graffiato bowl in the Afrasiyab style.

41 BOWL

D 22.8, H 6.3 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Around the wall, double-outlined triangular and four-sided graffiato compartments filled with a design suggesting a curved stem with a leafy addition. This design is less obviously leaflike than its counterpart on 23. The bottom, crosshatched, is spotted with purplish brown, as are the white areas on the wall. The other colors are green and brownish yellow. Fired upright.

42 BOWL

D 24, H 7.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Around the wall, double-outlined triangular graffiato compartments filled with foliate forms. Bottom, crosshatched. Streaks of dark green on the wall; spots of purplish brown in the white areas. Exterior streaked with yellow and green. Base partially glazed. Fired upright.

Several more or less similar bowls with flaring sides were found, apparently products of the same factory. Some of them have a steplike change of angle at the junction of the inner wall and the bottom; a dish in the Metropolitan (39.40.8) has a corresponding change of angle on the exterior. An unusual feature in the color-splashed ware, this change of angle on the exterior is common in the polychrome on white (Group 4, 12, among others). In the Metropolitan (32.150.324) is a ninth-century color-splashed bowl from Ctesiphon without graffiato decoration, with a ridge rather than a change of angle at the junction of wall and bottom.

43 BOWL

D 25, H 7.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Double-outlined five-sided graffiato compartments alternate around the wall with double-outlined four-sided compartments. The five-sided ones, larger in size, are filled with leafy decoration more or less contained within two circles. The four-sided ones, whose bottom side is drawn uncharacteristically as a straight line, are filled with upward-pointing scales. Fired upright. The design, while slightly reminiscent of 27, is unusual. The scales (compare 40) suggest manufacture in Afrasiyab, as do the wavy lines of the crosshatch on the bottom.

44 BOWL

D 22, H 7 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Decoration of loosely drawn radial bands and subsidiary curved forms, colored greenish yellow, the spaces between them filled with graffiato spirals and scribbles. Fired inverted, as usual in bowls with greenish yellow, with thickening of the glaze at the rim. Made in the same factory as 30 and 47. Along with 29, one of the few color-splashed bowls with a design related to one found in the buff ware (Group 1, 41–43). A Nishapur bowl much like 44, colored in green and purplish brown, is in the Teheran museum.

45 BOWL

D 23.5, H 7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.86

A cross made of eight double-outlined graffiato hearts, with additional hearts in the spaces between the "arms." The hearts contain pendant trefoils. Freely drawn half-palmettes appear on the wall between the hearts. Colors: green and brownish yellow with spots of purplish brown. On the exterior, alternate spots of green and brownish yellow. The base, concave, has no engobe but is glazed. Fired inverted, with thickening of glaze at rim. The decoration of the interior is unusual, suggesting that the bowl was imported. The dark circular line on the bottom is the mark of a bowl that was fired within 45 without interposition of a stilt.

46 BOWL

D 24, H 7 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Double-outlined biconvex forms with added outlines of green are arranged in various patterns around the wall and on the bottom, the three- and four-sided areas between them filled with graffiato scribbles. Spots of purplish brown are placed in the biconvex forms. Fired inverted, with thickening of glaze at rim. A common design, another example of which is in the Metropolitan (40.170.104). Although a waster of a bowl of this type was found, the site of the kiln that produced it was not.

47 BOWL (minor restoration)

D 24.2, H 7.7 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.145

A variant of 46, with some of the biconvex forms elaborated into curved V's. Smaller curved V's have been introduced in the four five-sided compartments that are spaced around the wall. Graffiato spirals fill the rest of

these compartments as well as the four-sided compartments on the wall and bottom. The base, concave, is covered with engobe but is only sparsely glazed. Fired inverted, with thickening of glaze at rim and formation of drops on one side. Made in the same factory as 30 and 44. For a somewhat similar bowl, undoubtedly found in Nishapur, see Jakobsen, *Islamische Keramik* Exhibition Catalogue, fig. 5.

48 BOWL

D 22.5, H 8.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Flaring sides with incurved rim (compare 29, 31, 49–51). Decoration of three- and five-sided graffiato compartments filled with loosely drawn foliate forms. The exterior is blobbed with yellow and green alternately, the customary treatment on bowls of this shape. Fired upright, like most such pieces. Probably tenth century. Color-splashed graffiato bowls of this shape were also made in Syria in the ninth and tenth centuries (Lane, *Archaeologia*, LXXXVII, p. 36, pl. XVIII, no. 2).

49 BOWL

D 22, H 9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.81

Flaring sides, incurved rim. Base, strongly concave, is splashed with engobe and is glazed. On the interior, around the wall, double-outlined three- and five-sided graffiato compartments filled with loosely drawn foliate forms. The bottom is crosshatched with wavy lines. At the rim, a line of scallops, doubly outlined and filled with short curved strokes. Compare with 21, a bowl made by the same potter. On the exterior, blobs of yellow and green. Fired upright. Found with 48. Probably tenth century.

50 BOWL

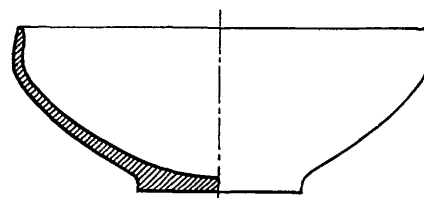
D 22.5, H 8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.56

Flaring sides with incurved rim. Base, concave, has a few streaks of engobe and is partly glazed. Three- and five-sided graffiato compartments filled with loosely drawn foliate forms alternate around the wall. Three spots of color are added in the intervening white spaces: two of purplish black, one of yellow. On the bottom, a green spot surrounded by four yellow ones. Just below the rim, a circumscribing wavy graffiato line. On the exterior, splashes of green and brownish yellow alternate. Fired upright. Found with 48 and 49. Probably tenth century.

51 BOWL

D 21.5, H 8.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Flaring sides with incurved rim. The graffiato forms on the walls and bottom are sketchy, the details mere scribbles. Exterior: blobs of green at the rim. Fired inverted. Bowls of this sort were found in great number, confirmation that they were made locally. According to the locations in which they were found, they were not made until



1:3

the end of the tenth century. The drawing shows a typical section and profile.

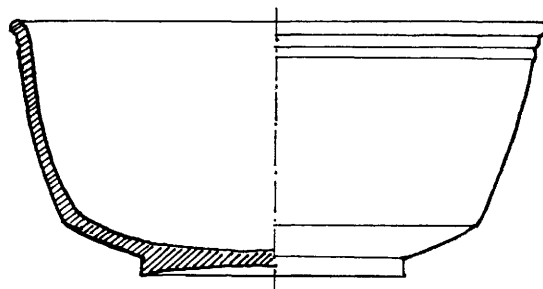
52 BOWL

D 21.3, H 11 cm ; minor sondage
MIB

Sides nearly vertical, rim flattened. Beneath the rim, on the exterior, a circumscribing groove. The graffiato decoration on the exterior, consisting of double-outlined compartments, three-sided alternating with five-sided, corresponds to the interior decoration of shallow bowls with flaring sides, with or without upturned rims (41, 50). The compartments are colored with splashes of green and yellow; splashes of purplish black adorn the spaces. The interior, without graffiato decoration, is adorned with alternate rows of green splashes and brownish yellow splashes. Many deep bowls of this sort were found.

53 BOWL

D 20, H 11.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 36.20.1



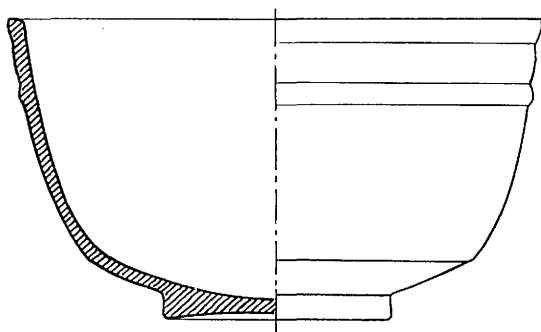
1:3

Sides nearly vertical, rim flattened. Beneath the rim, on the exterior, two circumscribing lines. Base, concave, is partly glazed. Graffiato decoration on the exterior consists of large double-outlined scallops at the rim, filled with

curved strokes (compare 21, 49), and a leaflike form that takes the design onto the lower part of the wall; splashes of the usual colors. The interior (Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, October, 1937, p. 10, fig. 9) resembles that of 52 with its rows of green and brownish yellow splashes. Tenth century. The drawing is of a closely related piece.

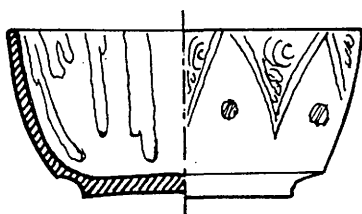
54 BOWL

D 20.5, H 12 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.112



1:3

Sides nearly vertical. Base, slightly concave, partly glazed. Beneath the rim is the circumscribing groove usually found on these tall bowls; below this is a prominent ridge. The potter has used the latter as a dividing line in his decoration, placing a row of graffito triangles around the rim and a row of similar but larger triangles beneath the ridge. Spots and streaks of purplish brown appear in the spaces between the triangles. The other colors are the usual green and brownish yellow. Greenish glaze, more strongly green on the interior. The decoration on the exterior is a loose version of one found on the interior of bowls with flaring sides (42) and platters (28). A miniature version of this type of bowl was found in the Qanat Tepe:



1:2

55 BOWL

D 21.3, H 16 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Sides nearly vertical. Flattened, slightly projecting rim. Beneath the rim, between two circumscribing lines, a broad, wavy line made with a blunt point, a decoration seen on other color-splashed pieces (38, 50) but more usual on bowls with a simple overall green glaze (Group 9, 25). Superimposed on the lines are loosely drawn graffito triangles and vertical bands, crosshatched, a decora-

tion comparable to that of certain color-splashed lids (39) and bowls with flaring sides (17, 56). The interior of 55 is adorned with irregular blobs of color.

56 BOWL

D 19.5, H 6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.125
(Color Plate 3, page xiv)

Loosely drawn graffito decoration of three radial bands alternating with three triangles. The forms have double outlines and are crosshatched. On the bottom, a double-outlined, crosshatched circle. The glaze is well preserved, and the colors retain their original brilliance. The exterior and the base, which is slightly concave, are covered with engobe, but the glaze extends only halfway down the outer wall. The exterior is undecorated. Fired inverted, the customary method for bowls decorated with simple crosshatching, whether colored with brownish yellow, as here, or greenish yellow. For comparable decorations of alternating bands and triangles, see 17, 39, 55.

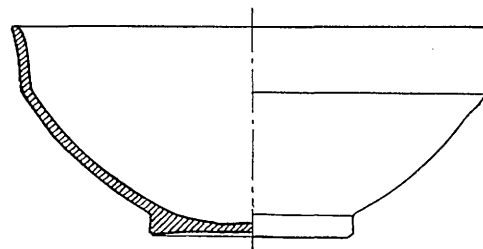
57 BOWL

D 18.2, H 5.6 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Around the wall, a band of large graffito circles with double outlines, unfilled, the spaces between the circles crosshatched. On the bottom, a similar circle. Colors: yellow, green, purplish brown. Placed in the kiln at a slant. The design (see also 62) is unusual. Bowls with graffito circles were made in Iraq, but there, instead of being left blank, the circles were filled with freely drawn forms barely recognizable as foliate (*Excavations at Samarra 1936-1939*, II, pl. LXXXI, lower). Double-outlined, foliage-filled circles also occur in the monochrome ware of Nishapur (Group 9, 44).

58 BOWL

D 19, H 9 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.141



1:3

Upturned rim, slightly concave base. On the exterior, engobe and glaze present on the vertical rim only; this is decorated with spots of green and yellow. Interior: a simple graffito decoration of broad interlacing bands with

curling lines in the intervening spaces. The spaces are filled with purplish black spots; the bands, outlined in green, are colored greenish yellow, the latter color typical of bowls with plain bands. Fired inverted. For a similar bowl, probably found in Nishapur, see Lane, *Hitchcock Collection*, pl. 19. For a bowl from Rayy with looser decoration, see Pézard, *Céramique*, pl. XLVI, upper.

59 BOWL FRAGMENT

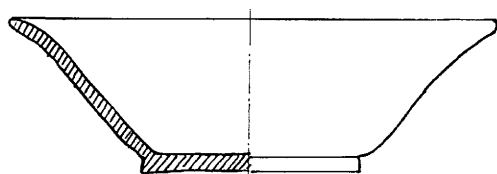
D 16.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Reddish body, white engobe, glaze splashed with green, brownish yellow, and purplish brown. Fired upright. Graffiato decoration on the wall of double-outlined hour-glass-shaped and biconvex compartments. The scalelike single hatching in the compartments, common in Afra-siyab, was rarely, if ever, used by Nishapur potters. The nine-cusped graffiato rosette on the bottom is not duplicated on any other Nishapur piece. Probably an import.

A bowl found in Lashkari Bazar has similar compartments with other fillings, foliate forms alternating with crosshatching (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, p. 122, pl. XXVII, no. 522). The color-splashed graffiato ware of this eleventh-century site, unlike most of that found in Nishapur, is not completely covered with engobe and glaze on the exterior.

60 BOWL

D 19.8, H 6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.30

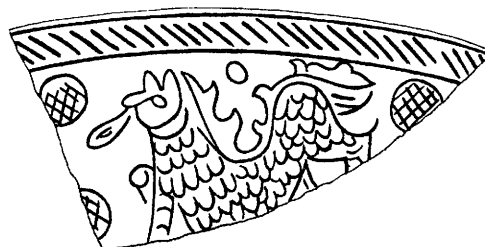


1:3

Reddish buff body. Flaring wall. Base, slightly concave, is covered with engobe and is partly glazed. Interior: graffiato decoration of double-outlined triangular compartments with scalloped sides, each divided into three parts filled with curved strokes. The center part resembles an inverted pinecone. Colors: green, brownish yellow, and purplish brown. Fired inverted. The triple-cusped areas of white between compartments are unique in the graffiato bowls found in Nishapur. This fact, together with the filling of the compartments and the silhouette of the bowl, suggests that this is an import. A somewhat similar graffiato decoration occurs on a bowl found in Syria (Lane, *Archaeologia*, LXXXVII, pl. XVII, no. 1).

61 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 13 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.479



1:2

Graffiato decoration of an animal beneath a diagonally hatched rim. The body of the animal is scaled. From its mouth issues a bladderlike form. Three strokes appear to serve as its tail. Close above the animal, and merging into the line of its back, is a double curve, foliated on the upper side. There seems to be no relation between the animal and any of those to be seen in the Nishapur buff ware. Contrary to the custom in Nishapur, the drawing was done before the vessel was covered with engobe. The exterior, like the interior, is adorned with splashes of yellow and green, the green having considerable iridescence. Not only the graffiato technique but the style of the decoration and the quality of the glaze are foreign to Nishapur. An import, probably from Iraq.

62 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 24 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Graffiato decoration of large double-outlined circles around the wall and on the bottom (compare 57), with fillings of scribbled spirals. Splashes of green, yellow, and purple. Present in the yellow areas are black specks, the sign of insufficient grinding of the metallic oxide. Fired inverted. Unusual decoration. Place of manufacture uncertain.

63 BOWL FRAGMENT

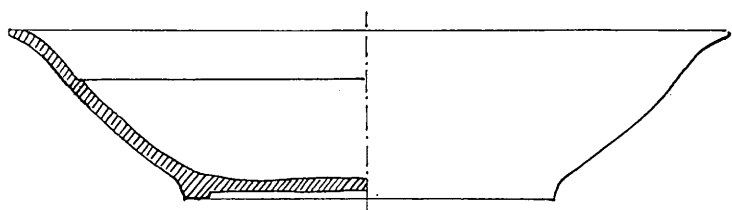
D 14 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.427

Graffiato decoration of two three-sided and two five-sided compartments filled with carefully drawn foliate forms. In the five-sided compartments these consist essentially of an S-shape enclosing leaflike motifs. In the white areas between the compartments are isolated groups of two or three parallel strokes; they also appear on 66, a bowl by the same potter. The base of 63, splashed with engobe, is glazed. Fired upright. Probably early tenth century. The S-motif with leaflike forms goes back to the eighth

century in Islamic art; versions of it are to be seen in the carved wood panels of the Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem (Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, II, pls. 25–27).

64 DISH

D 29.5, H 6.7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB



1:3

The one feature this piece has in common with the color-splashed graffiato ware of Nishapur is its reddish body. The shallow shape, broad rim, proper foot ring, and almost total concealment of the engobe beneath the glaze are some of the things that indicate importation. The glaze, colored green and an intense, almost opaque yellow, resembles that of pieces from Samarra and Ctesiphon. The graffiato decoration is also unlike any found on pieces made in Nishapur, consisting of loosely drawn curved lines that form no particular pattern and a long diagonal hatching on the rim (compare rim of 61, another import). Fired upright. Undoubtedly made in Iraq. Found in a low-level, ninth-century well.

65 BOWL

D 30.2, H 8.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

An import from the west. Most of the graffiato motifs are foreign to Nishapur: the large circles on the wall, the vertical bands that appear within them, the lotuslike motifs that fill the bands, the conventionalized treelike forms in the white areas between the circles, the scalelike filling of the triangular shapes at the rim. Fired upright. The quality of the glaze is similar to that of 64, another import. Colors: light green, dark green, yellow. The bottom, now badly spalled, may once have been decorated with a bird, like the second of the pieces mentioned below. Ninth century.

Graffiato bowls have been found at Susa with similar circles and bands, the decoration within the bands in one example being a repeated heart shape (Pézard, *Céramique*, pl. xxxi, top), in another, leafy forms (ibid. pl. xxxi, left). A variation of the scalelike filling appears in both these pieces, and a variant of the treelike form appears in the white spaces of the first. Although it is possible that these

pieces found at Susa were made there, it is more likely that they were imported from Iraq, where similar vessels have been found (*Excavations at Samarra, 1936–1939*, II, pl. lxxx, 3).

66 BOWL

D 26, H 7.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.137

(Color Plate 4, page xv)

Red body. The exterior glazed, touches of yellow and green added. Base, flat, has streaks of engobe and splashes of glaze. Interior: around the wall, a well-designed, carefully executed graffiato decoration of an inverted palmette within a double-outlined form resembling a tulip, alternating with a double-outlined, bell-shaped form containing two palmettes within an S-motif. The shape of the "bell" was perhaps dictated by the potter's wish to circumscribe the wall with a broad, wavy band forming four petal shapes. Groups of two or three short parallel strokes appear in this band and in the larger palmettes. On the bottom, a crosshatching of double lines. Stilt marks present. Fired upright. Found in a low-level room. Probably ninth century. Made by the potter of 63, the groups of added short strokes amounting nearly to his signature. The palmette-filled S-motifs also have their counterparts on 63, where additional comment on this motif is made.

67 a,b BOWL (waster)

W 22.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.295

Red body, burned black in part. The piece split in firing, and the rim is distorted. The base, concave, is covered with engobe but is unglazed. The exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is decorated with splashes of green; the copper, reduced in the kiln, causing reddish stains. On the interior, a loosely drawn, four-lobed graffiato figure with curl-filled lozenges between the lobes.

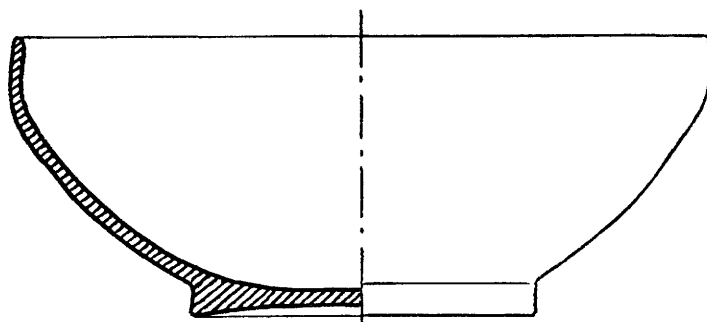
68 PLATE FRAGMENT

W 22 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 40.170.530

Another fragment of this plate is in the Teheran museum. Reddish body, white engobe. Glaze unusual in being somewhat opaque. Decoration: sectors filled with small splashes of strong brown black alternating with plain sectors toned transparent green (the green has almost disintegrated). For a related piece, see 10.

69 BOWL

D 19.3, H 7.6 cm ; Tepe Madrasah
MMA 39.40.93

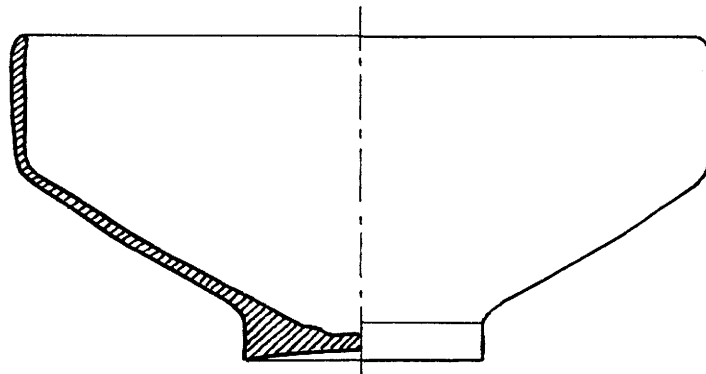


1:2

Red body, white engobe. Base slightly concave. Upturned rim. Exterior undecorated. Interior: four radial strokes of green, a pseudo-Kufic inscription in black above a black line in one of the spaces. An exceptional bowl in several respects. Kufic or pseudo Kufic does not occur in the typical color-splashed ware. The style of the "inscription" and its radial placing is in keeping with the tradition of the opaque white ware made in Nishapur, but here the glaze is transparent. On the other hand, the radial strokes of green are not characteristic of the opaque white ware.

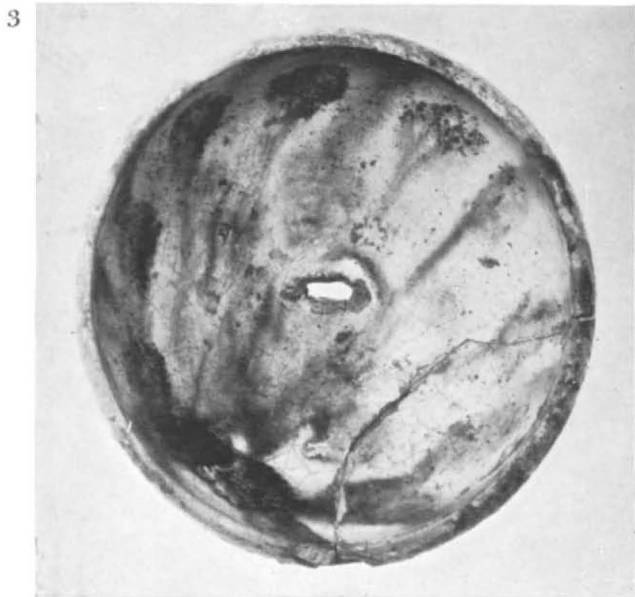
70 a,b BOWL

D 18.2, H 8.3 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.107

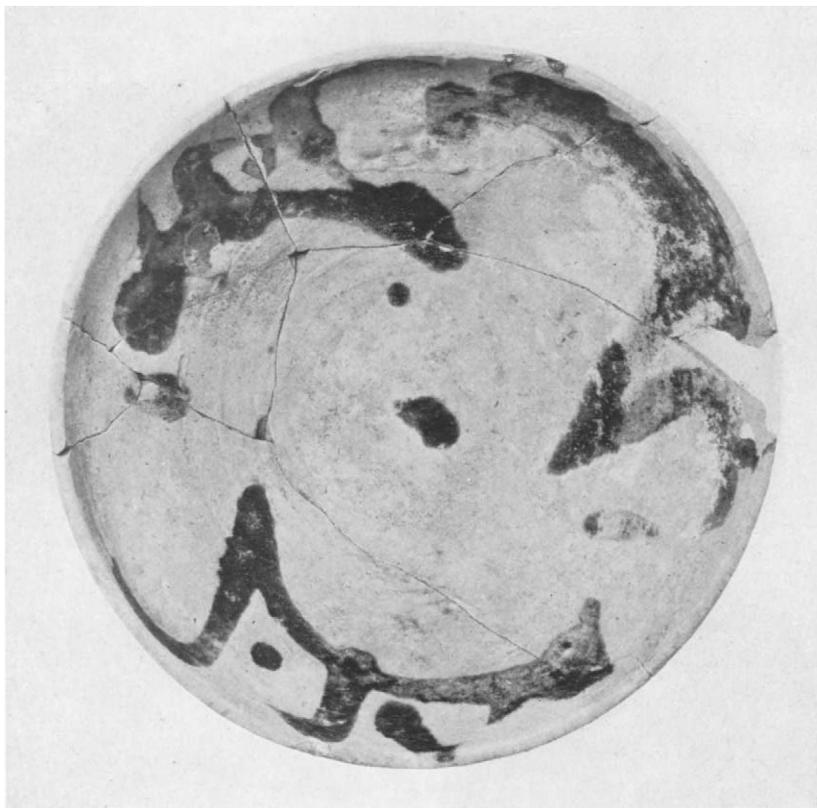


1:2

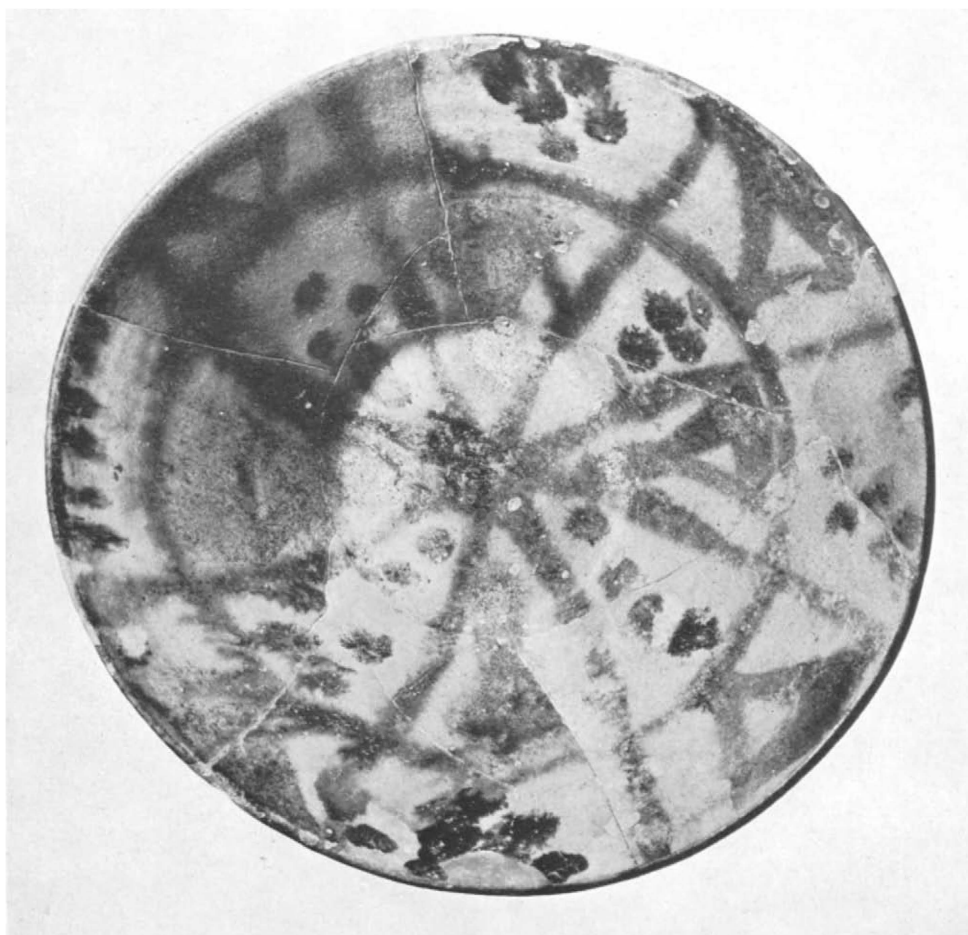
Reddish body, graffiato decoration, yellow-tinged glaze. Markedly different in shape from other color-splashed bowls found in Nishapur in that it has a high vertical collar. This is colored green on the exterior. The decoration, too, is exceptional: six radial lines so placed that they bound three narrow sectors alternating with three wide ones. The narrow sectors contain a wavy line, the wide ones a loosely drawn V. A few splashes of green have been added irregularly. Undoubtedly an import.



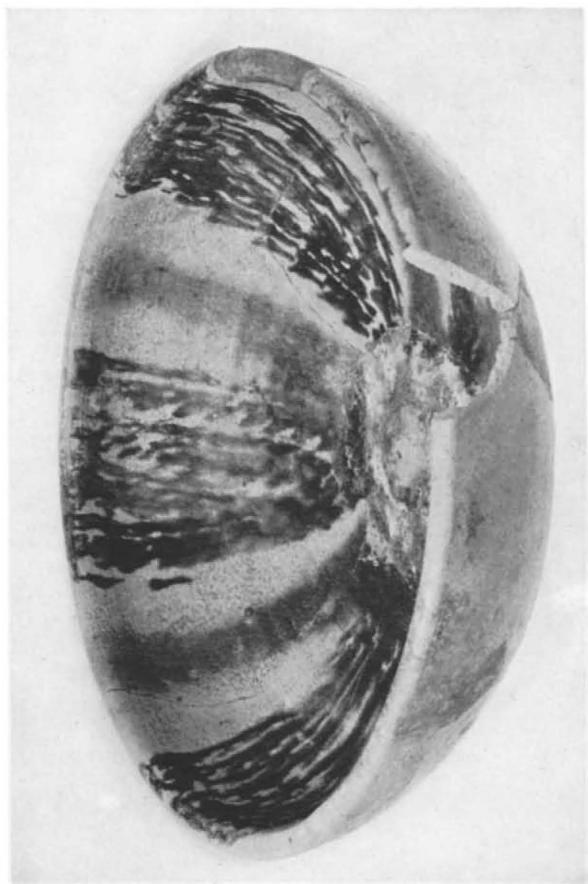
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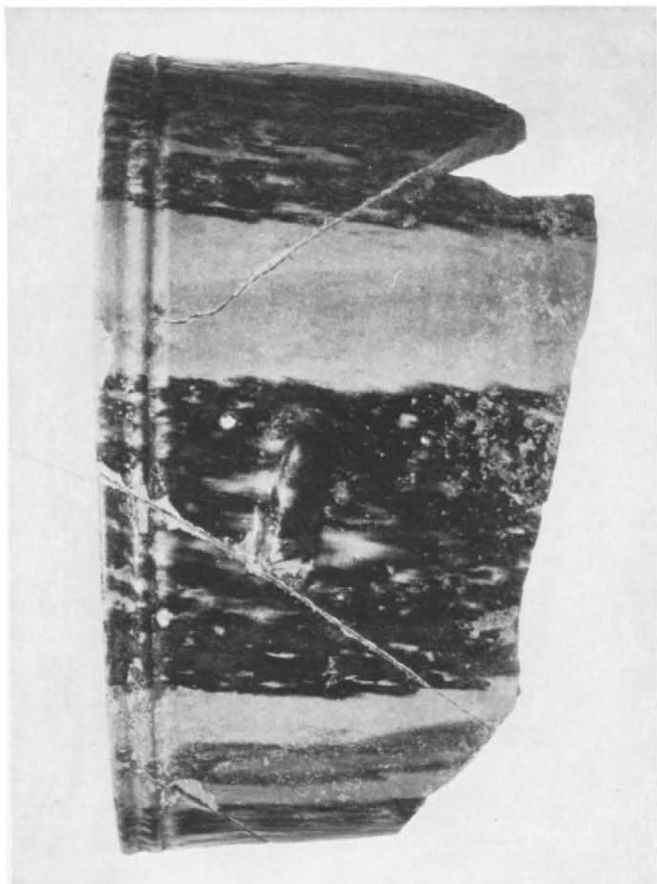
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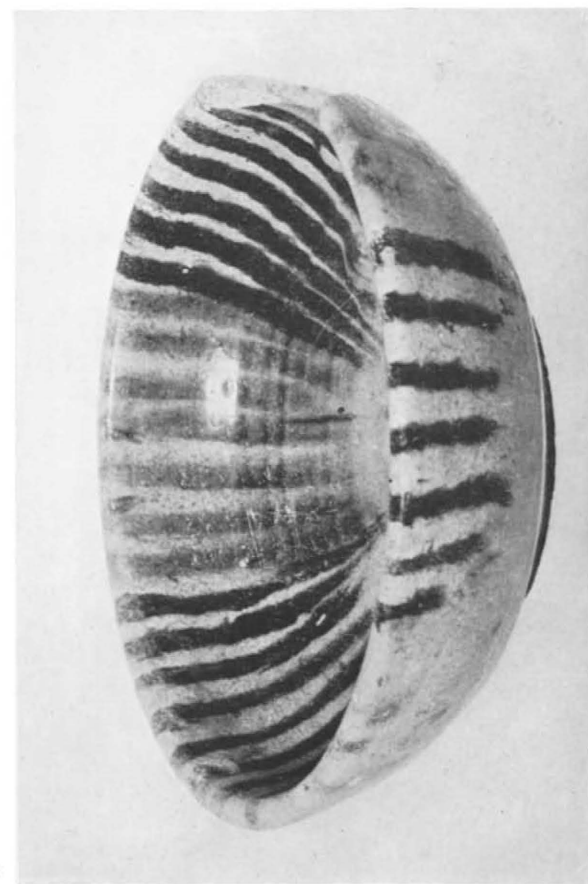
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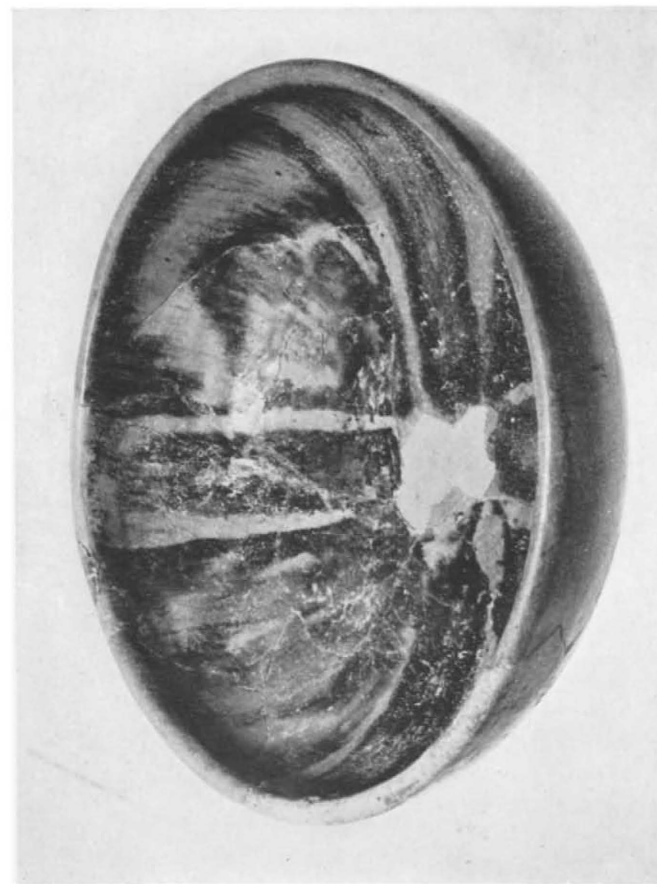
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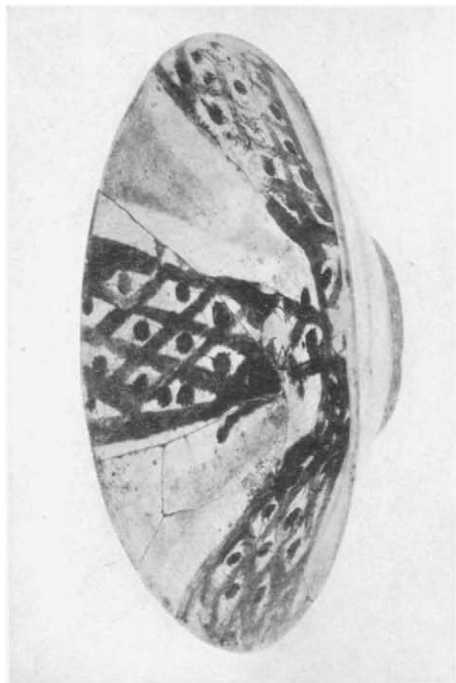
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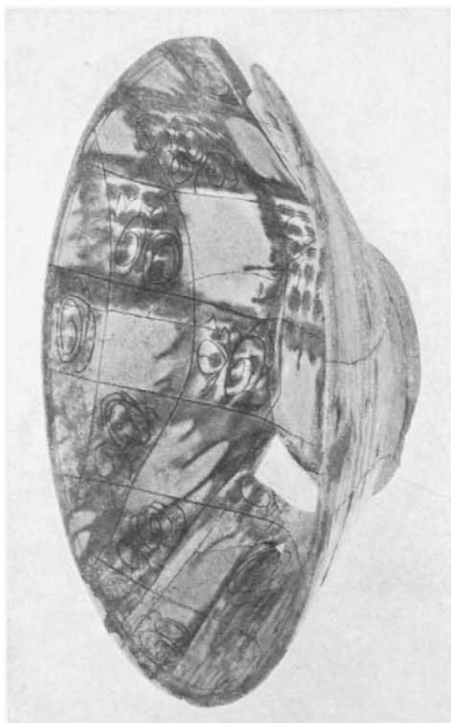
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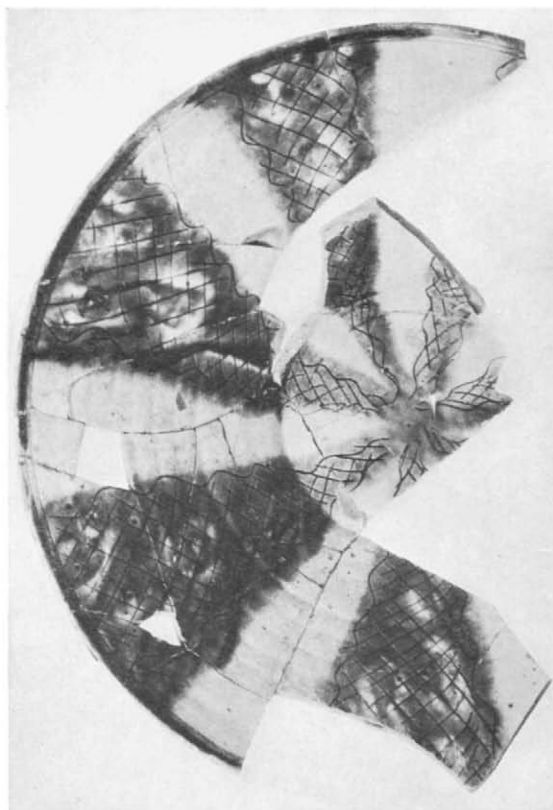
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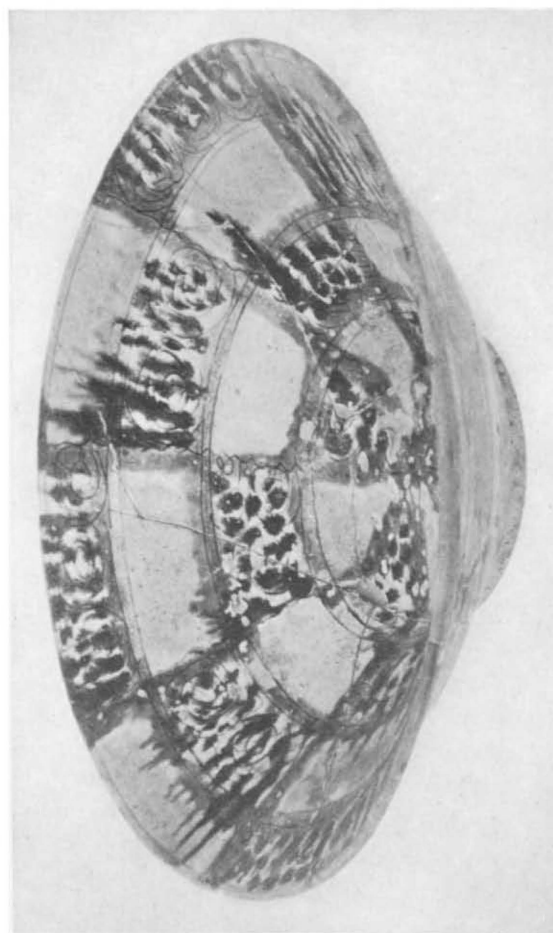
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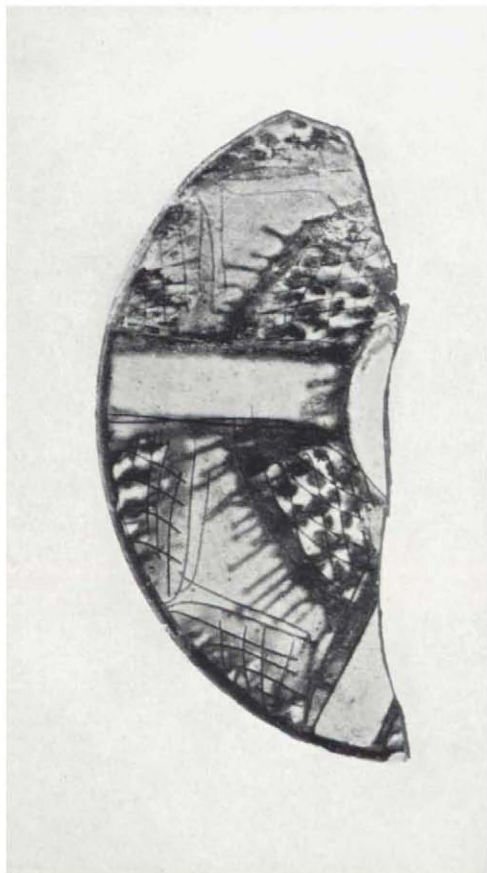
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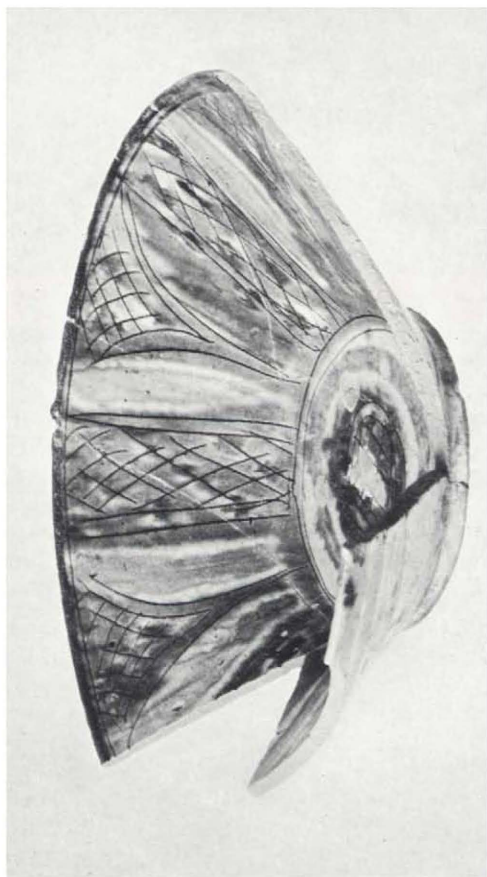
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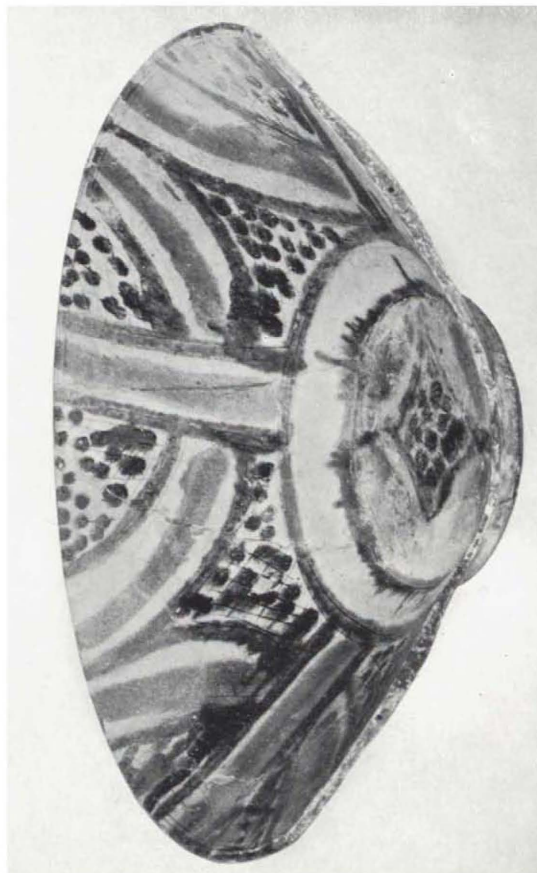
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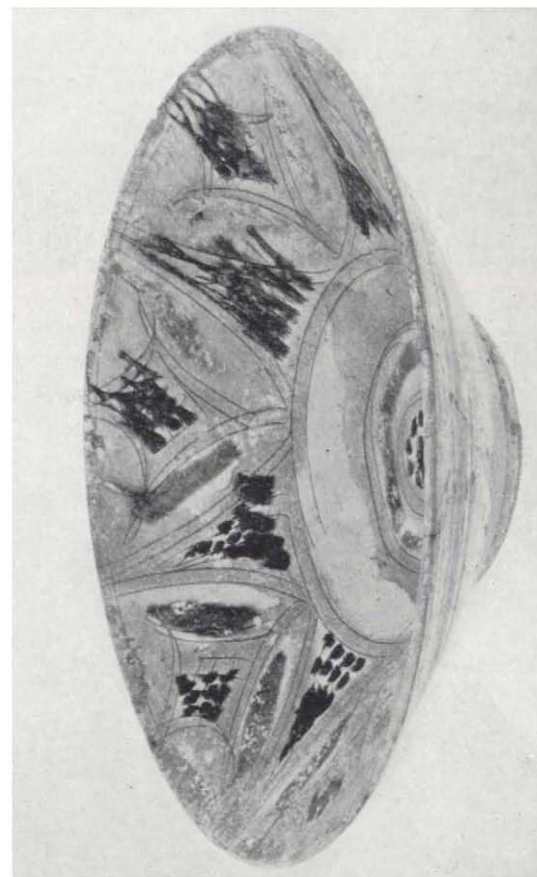
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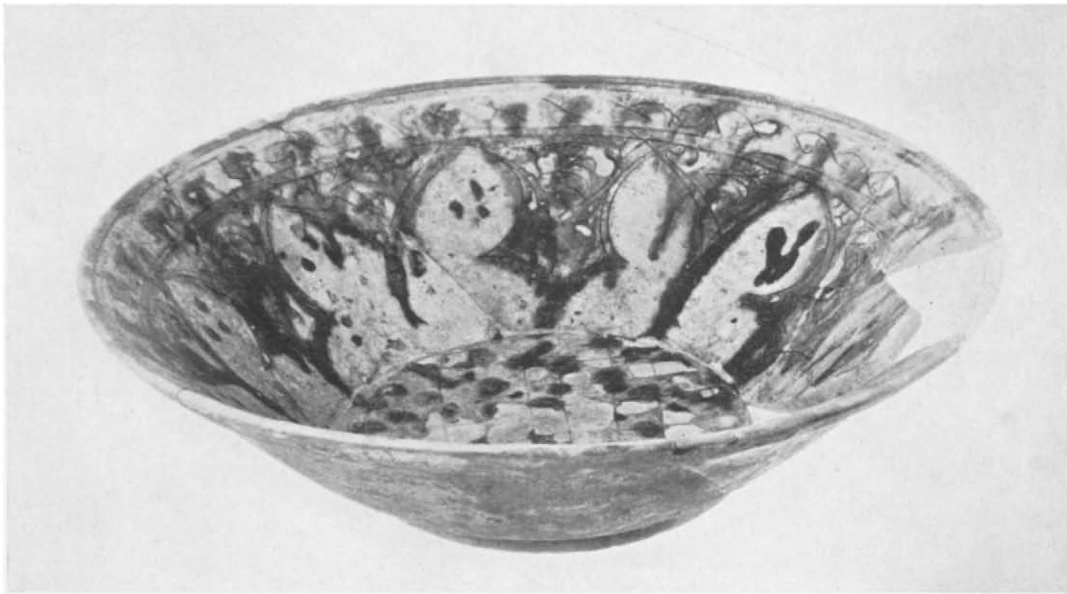


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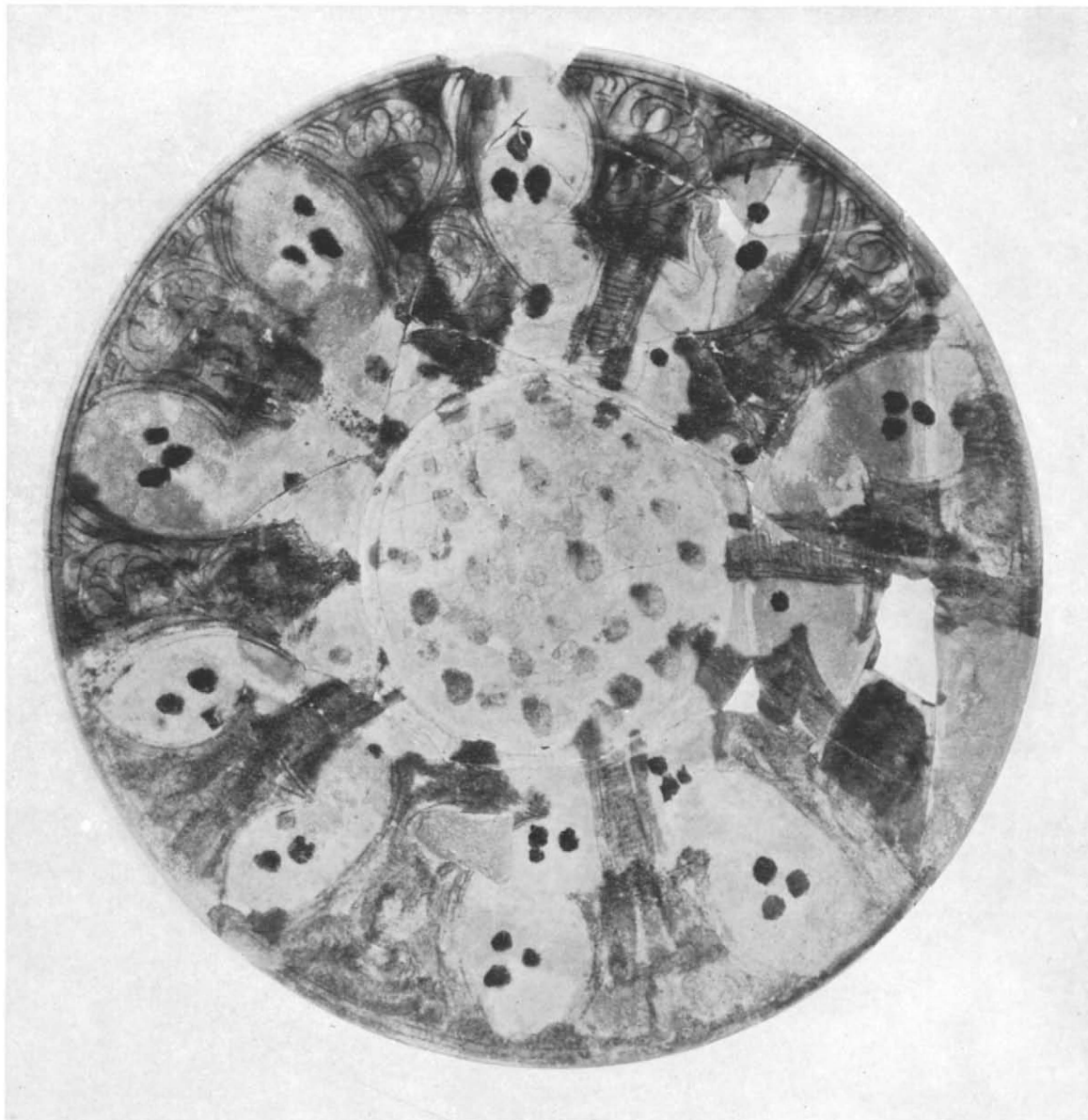


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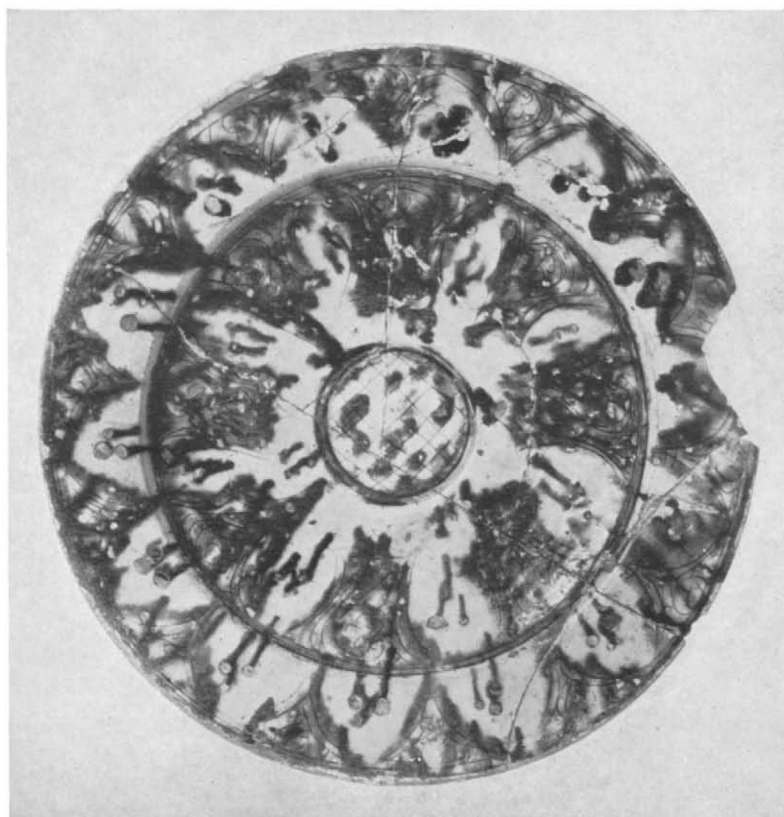
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27a



27b

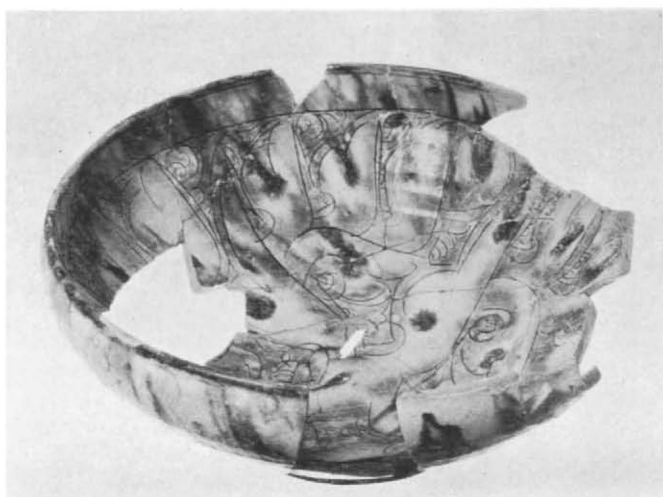




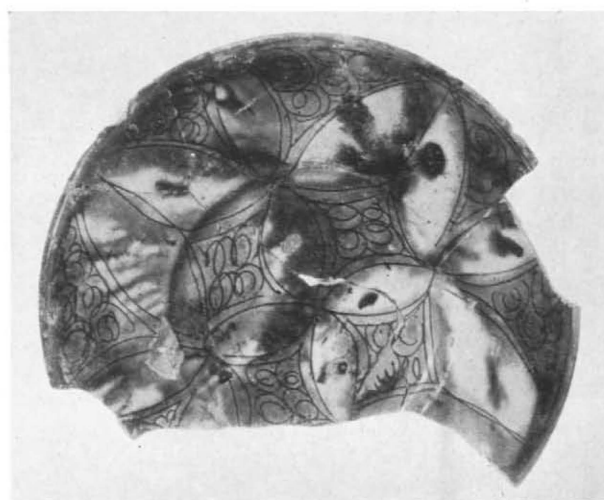
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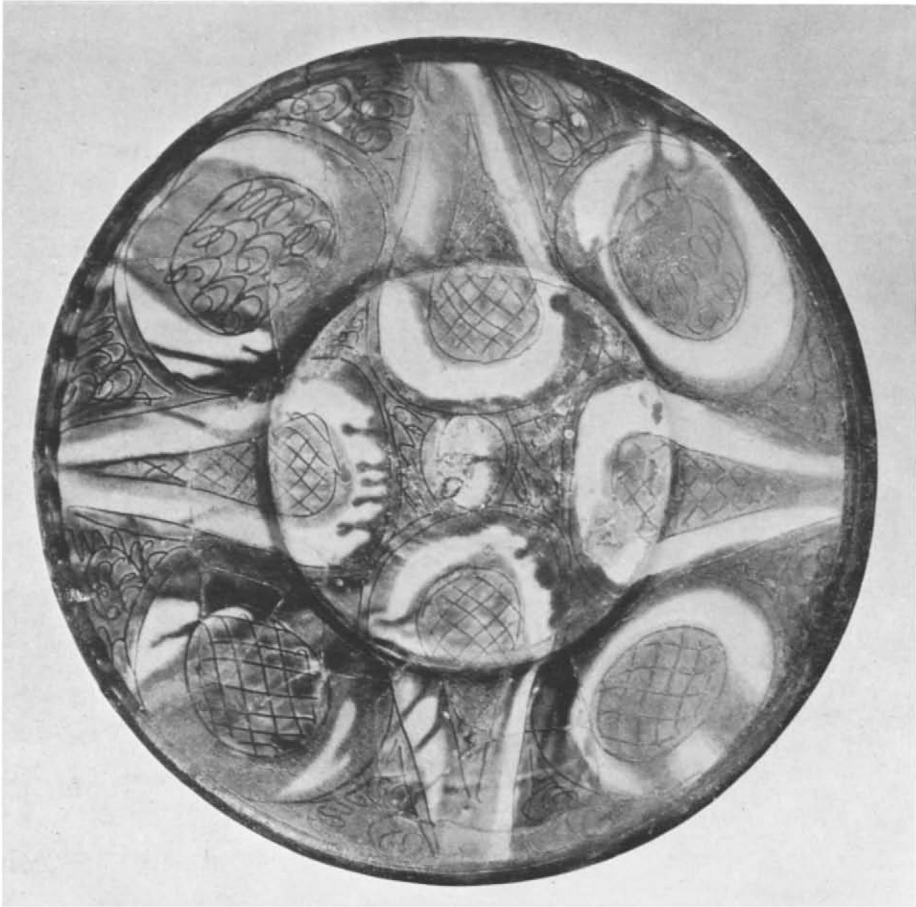
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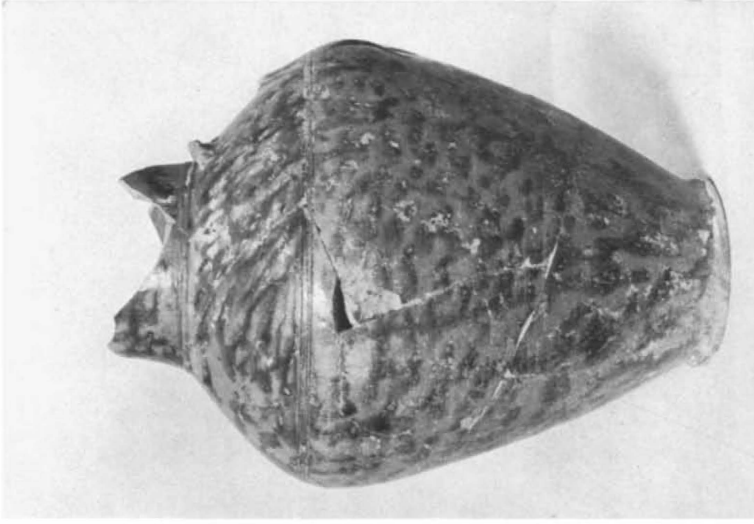


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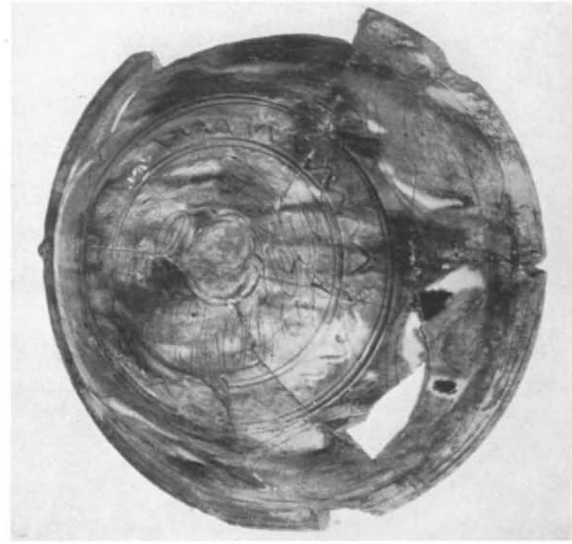
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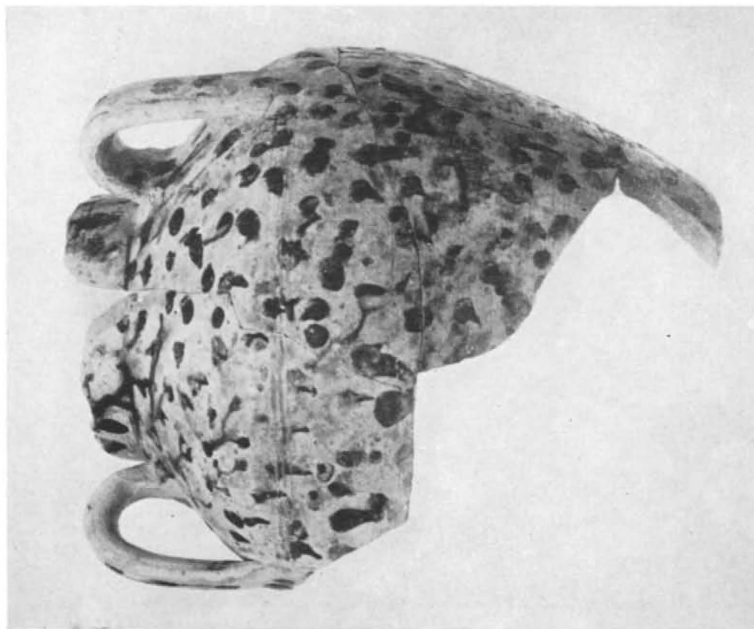
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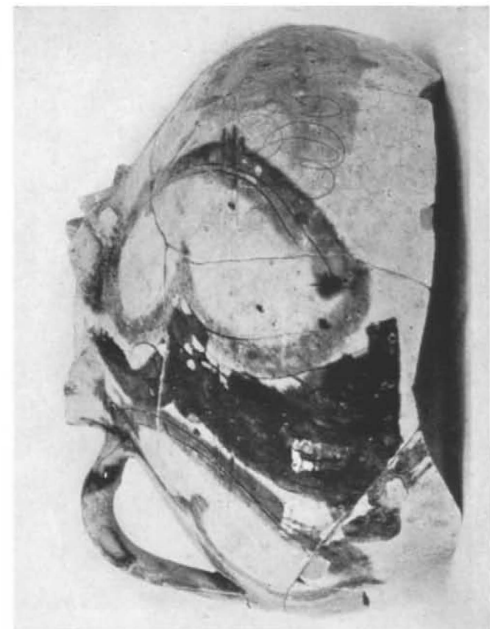
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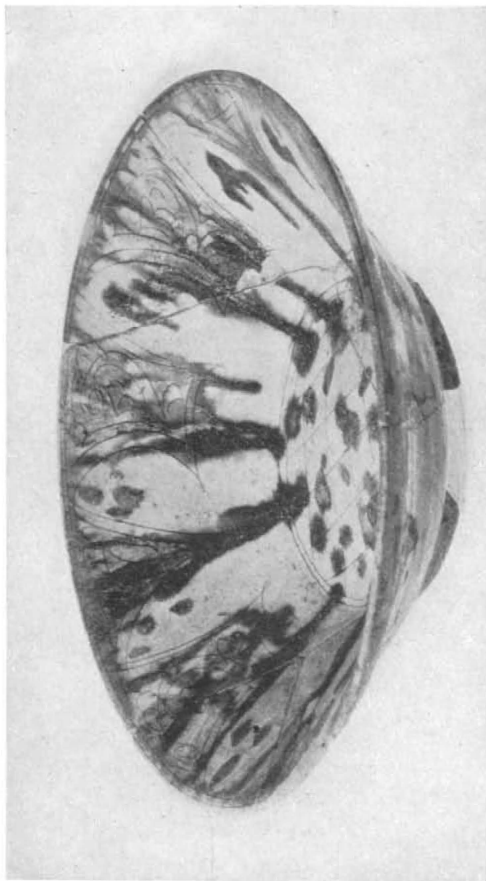
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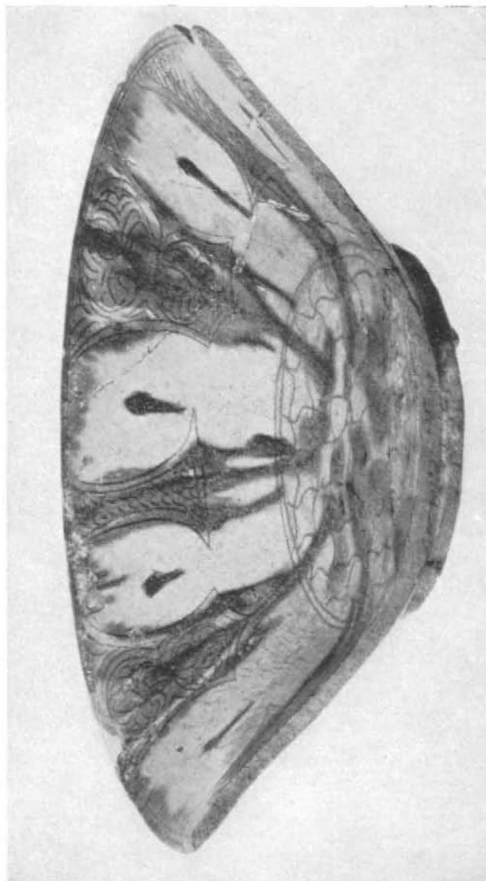
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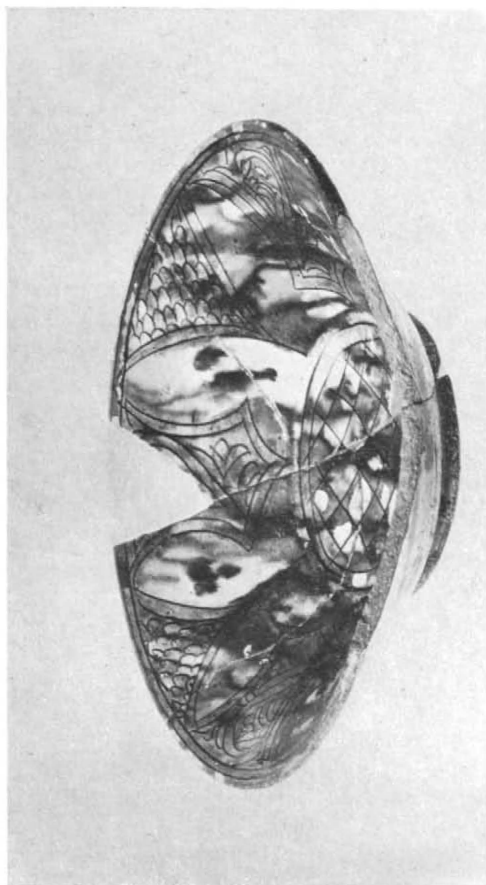
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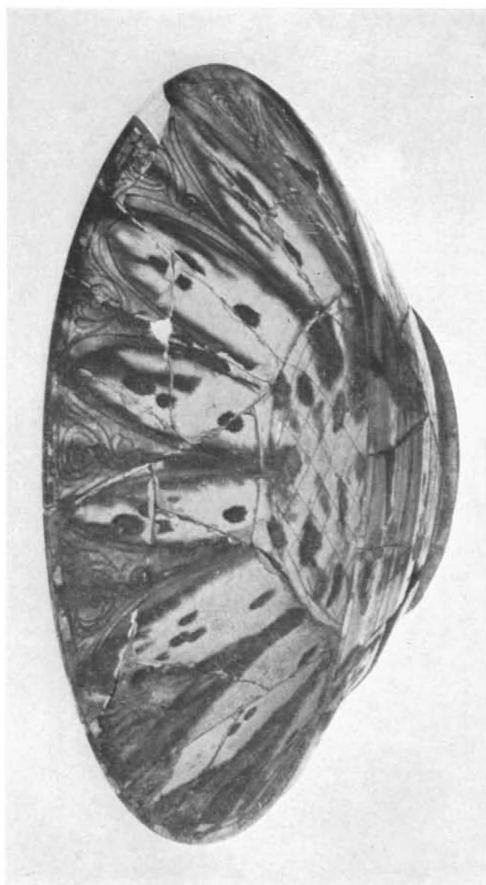
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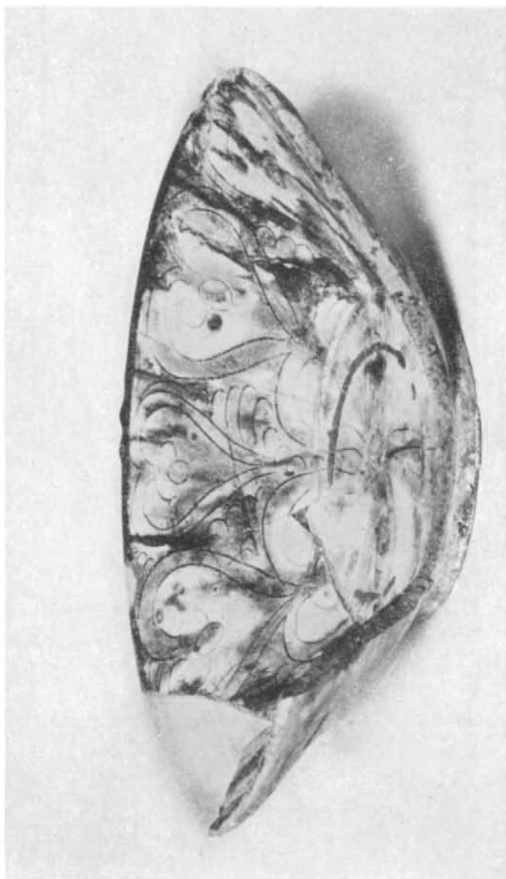
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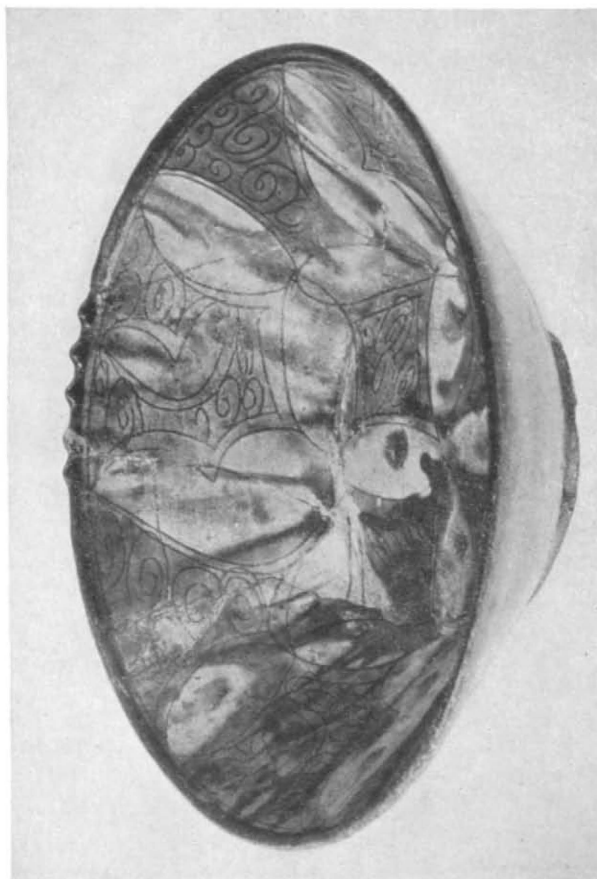
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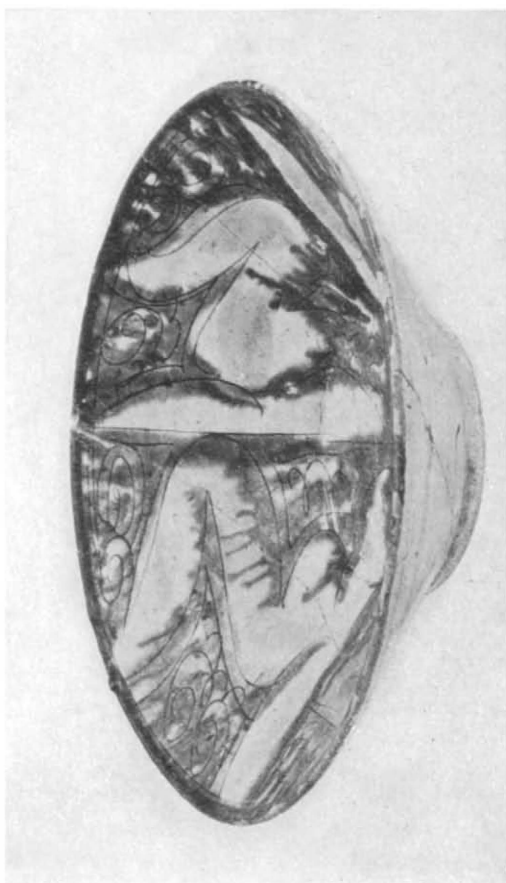
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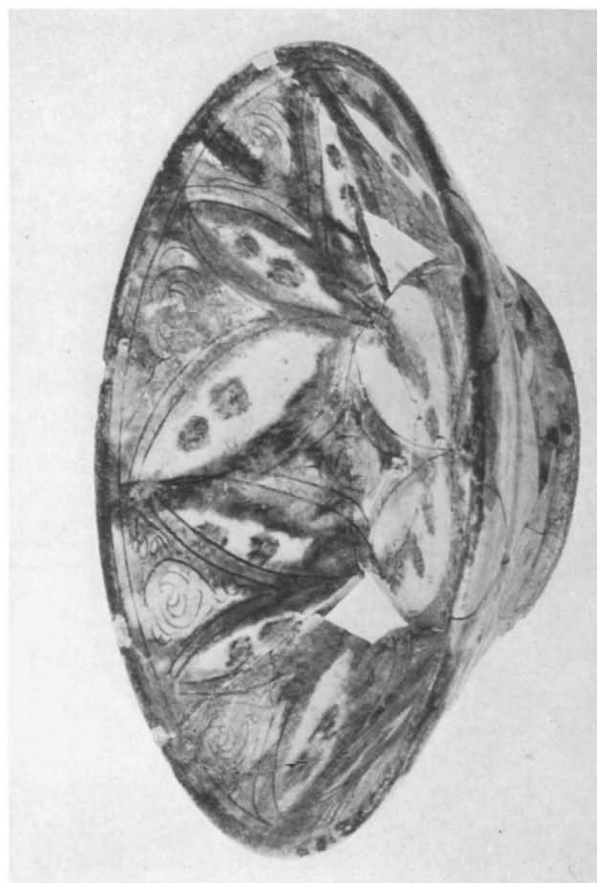
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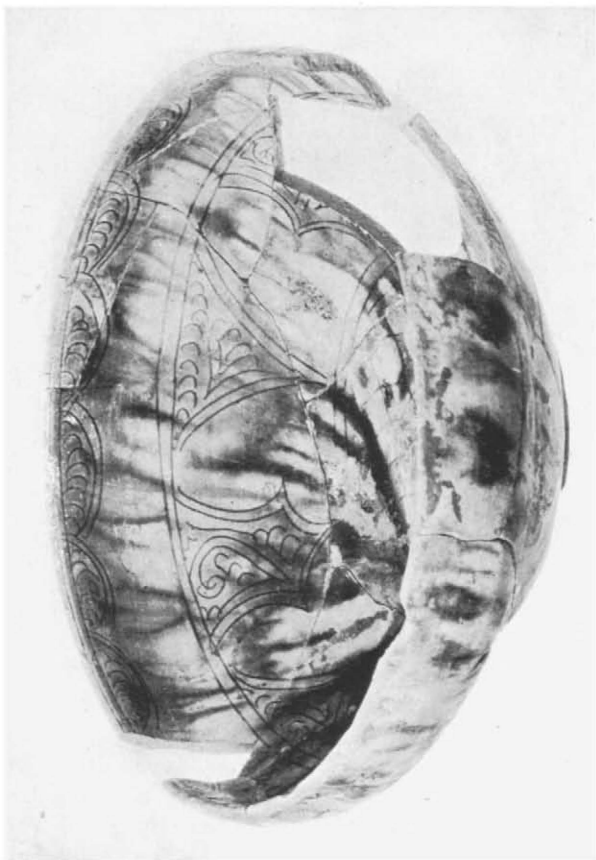
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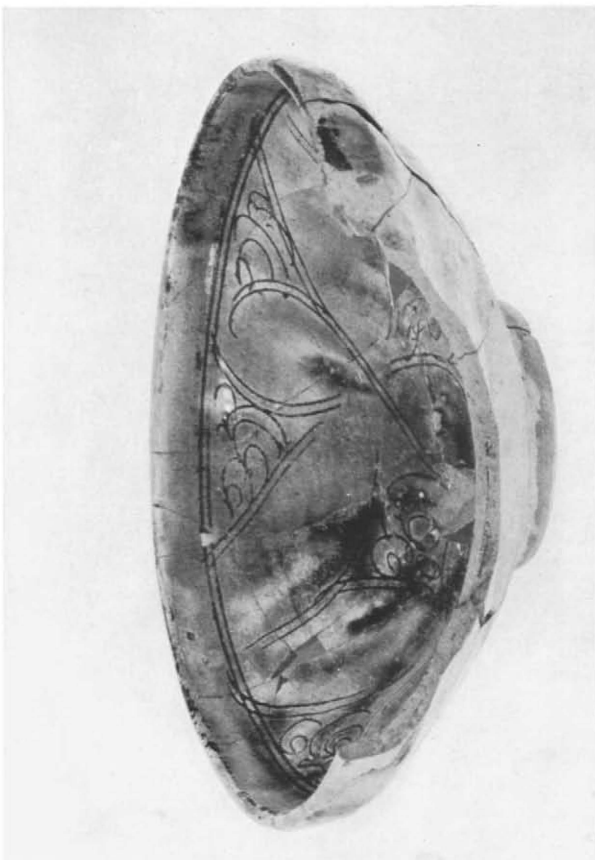
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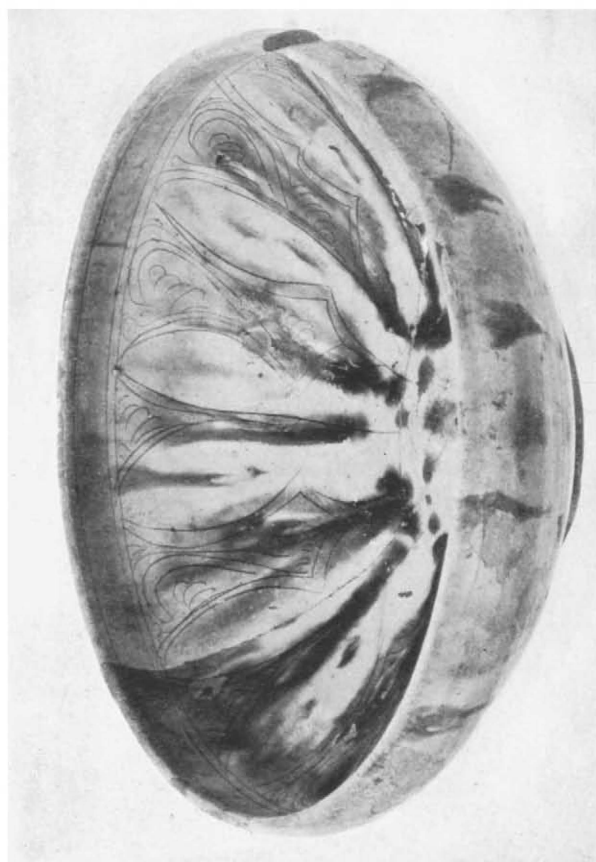
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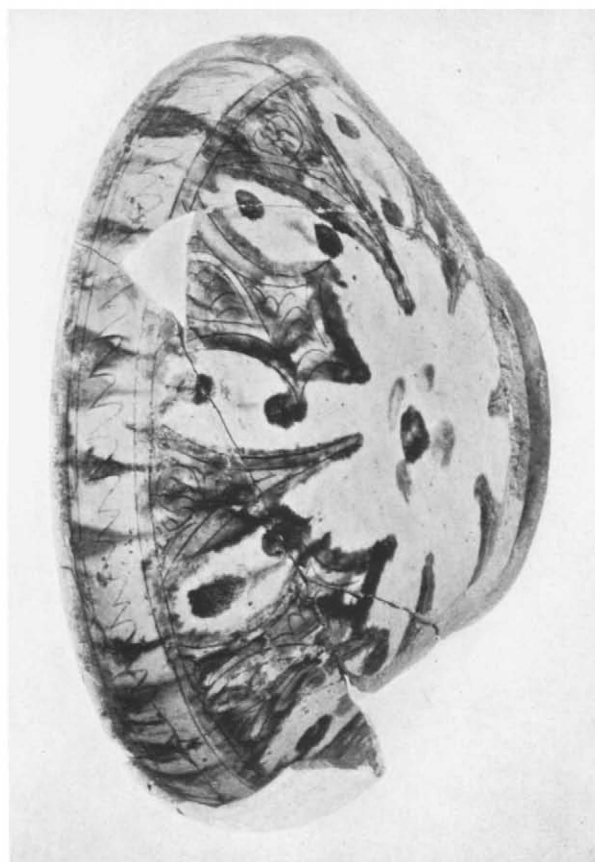
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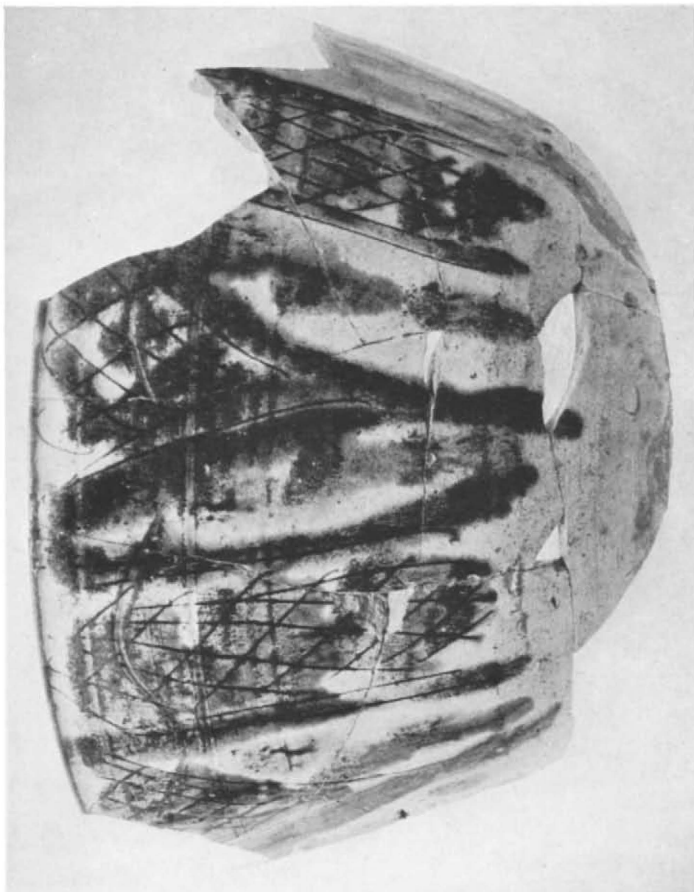


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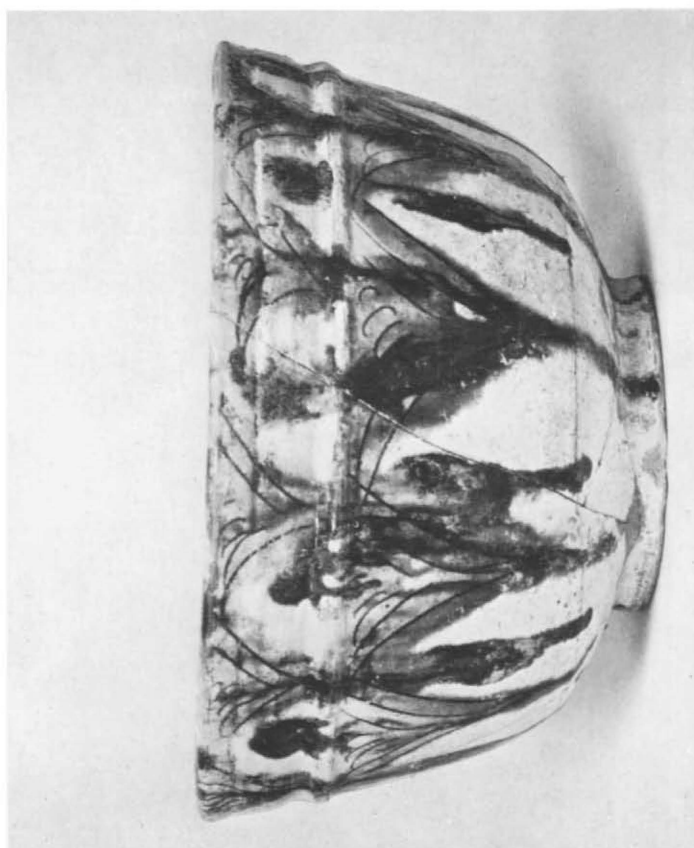
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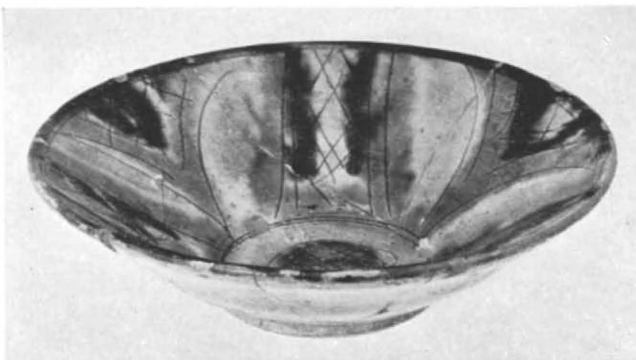


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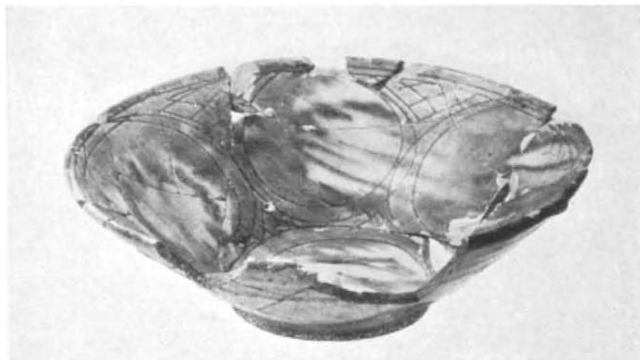


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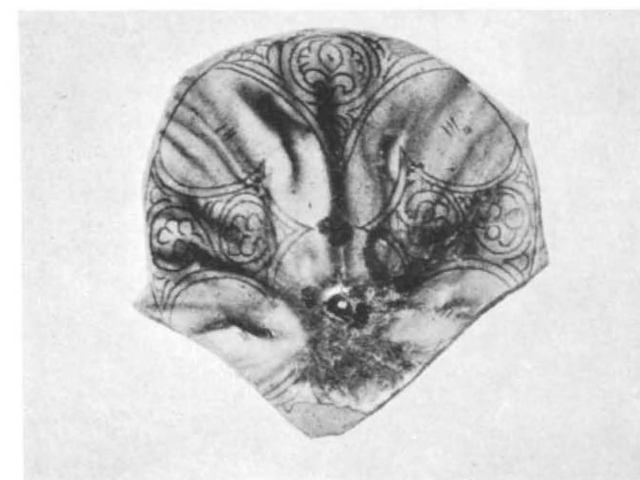
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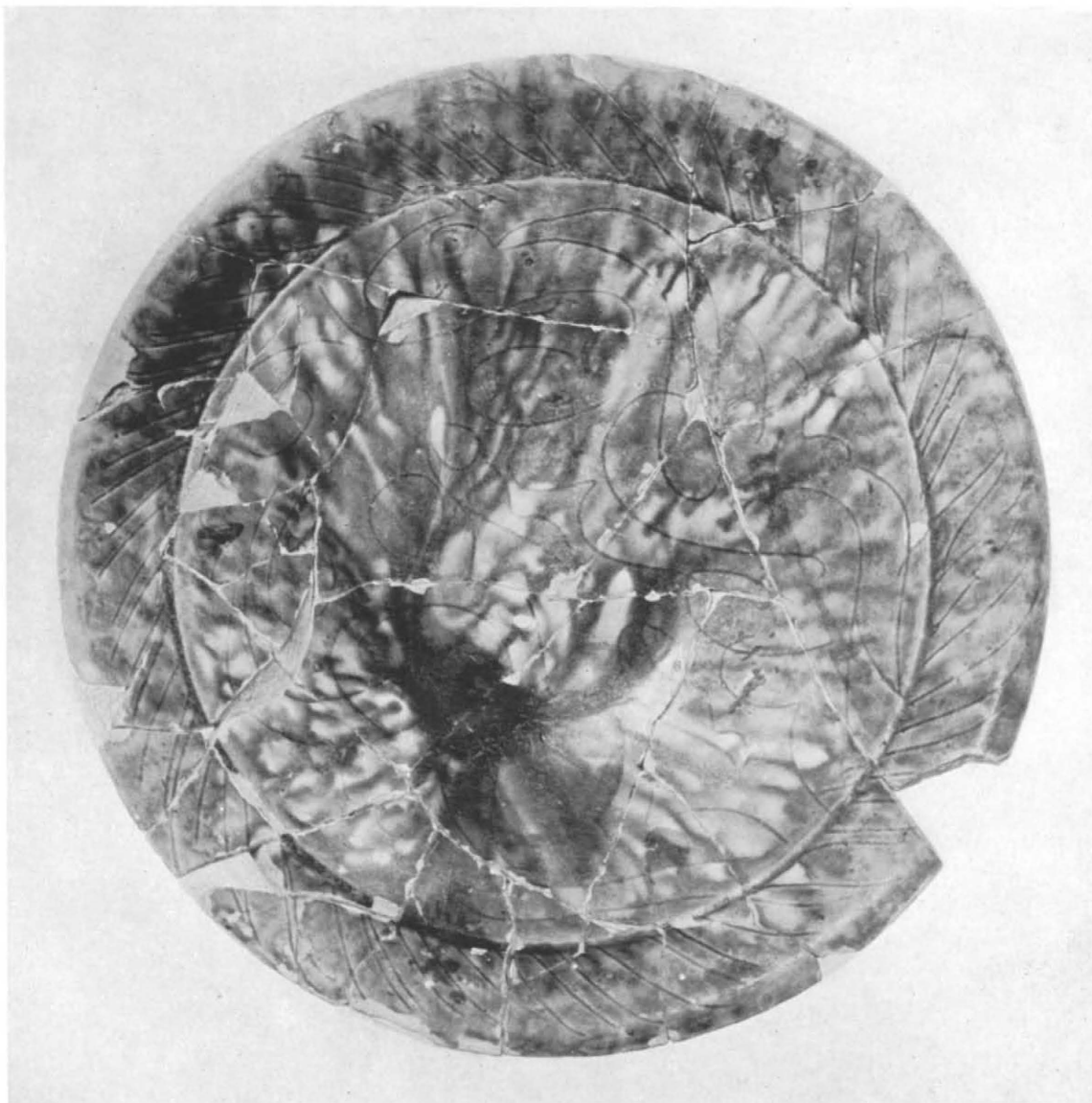


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63





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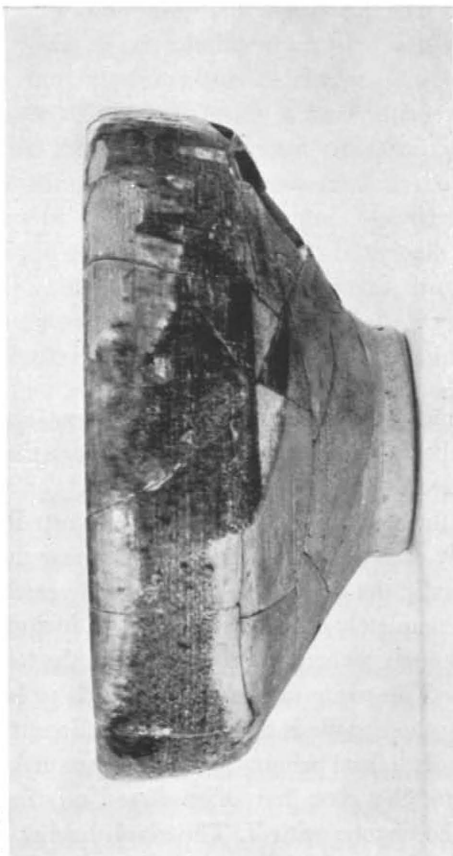
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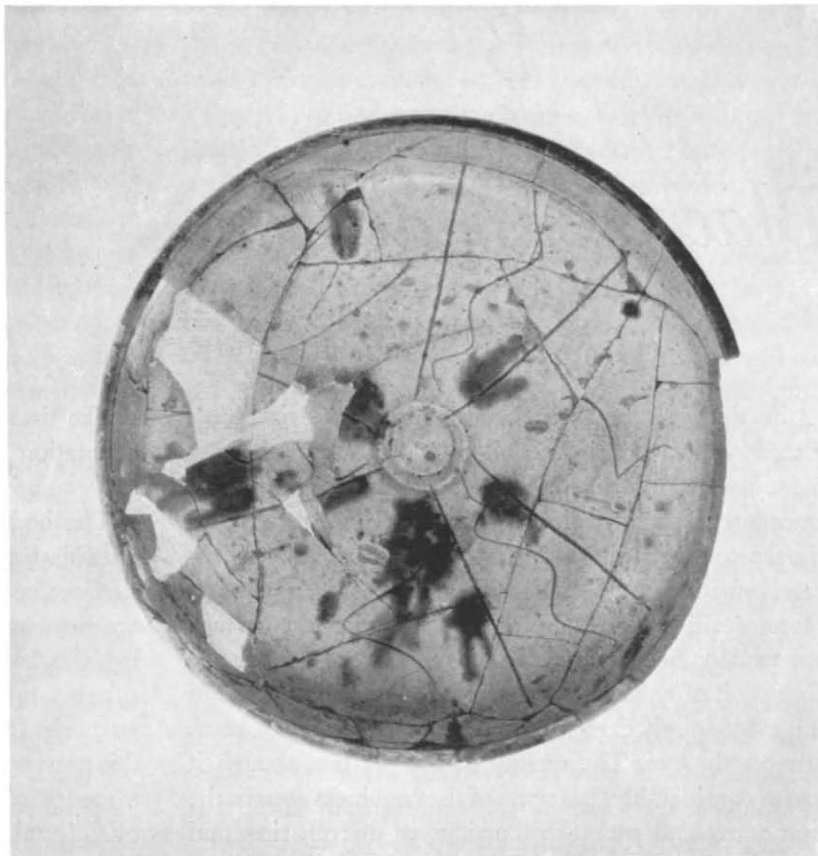
67b



70a



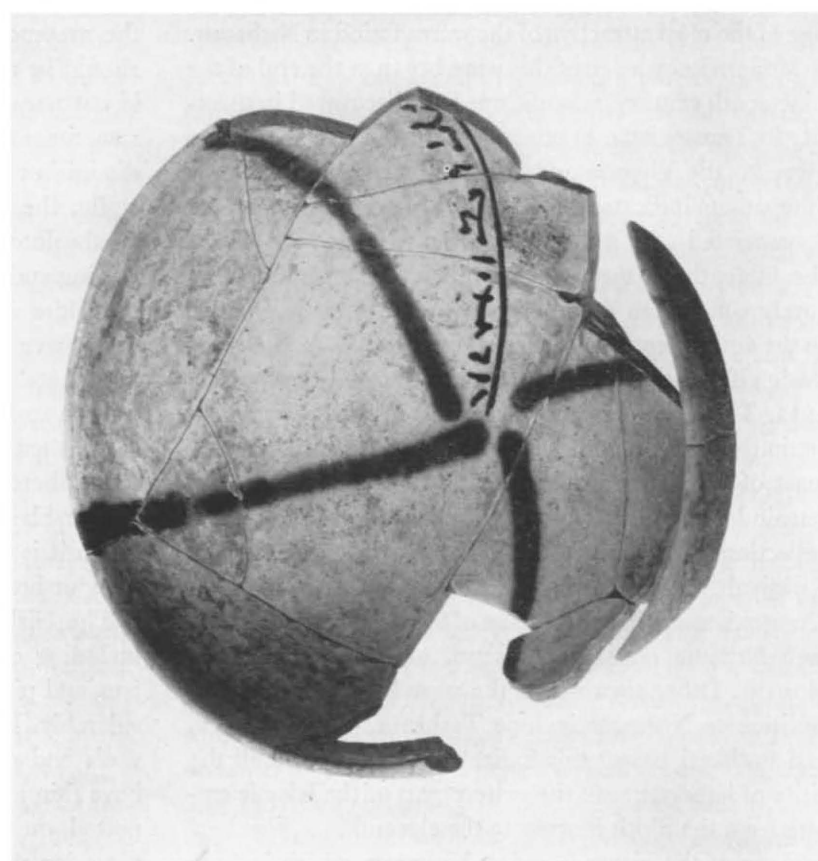
70b



68



69



3

Black on White Ware

The third of the three largest groups of Nishapur's glazed earthenware is decorated in black only, the pigment painted on a white engobe and covered with a transparent, usually colorless lead glaze. The designs, for the most part simple and well placed, are sometimes delicate, sometimes bold. In both there is a feeling of vitality. More sensitive than those of the buff ware, the designs are usually free of crowded, restless details. After the confusion of color and scratched design that prevails in the color-splashed ware, the clarity of the simple black attracts the eye. The quality of the potting, though it varies considerably, has none of the heaviness seen in the buff ware, and such shortcomings as uneven rims and defective bases are apt to pass unnoticed, such is the impact of the decoration. All in all, the black on white is one of the most attractive of the wares found in Nishapur.

Modern knowledge of this ware began at the end of the nineteenth century, when it was first discovered in quantity in Transoxiana. Fragments of it from Afrasiyab were given to the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1898 with Chopan-ata indicated as their place of origin. Chopan-ata is associated with a mausoleum built in the first half of the fifteenth century. As the hill is barren, the sherds surely come from the adjoining site of Afrasiyab (letter to the author from G. A. Pugachenkova). M. V. Stoliarov made gifts of the Afrasiyab ware to the same museum in 1911. The State Museum of Berlin acquired a large collection of sherds and wasters from Afrasiyab in 1906, most of which is now in the Islamisches Museum, the remainder in the Islamische Abteilung; wasters in this collection confirm that the ware was manufactured in Afrasiyab. Other collections of the ware as found in Transoxiana are in the museum of Samarkand, the Hermitage Museum, and the Museum of Oriental Culture, Moscow. Other sites where the ware has been found in addition to Nishapur include Tashkent, Gurgan, Merv, and Lashkari Bazar; this indicates it was used in all the cities of importance in the eastern part of the Islamic empire from the ninth century to the eleventh.

Many of the pieces found at Nishapur, which include wasters, a sure sign of local production, have decorations

unlike those found on this ware in other centers. The decoration of others, on the other hand, suggests that they were imported.

The body of the ware found in Nishapur is usually reddish, generally closer to red at the core than near the surface; occasionally the body is yellowish. The vessels are customarily completely covered with engobe, including the base, though sometimes the base simply has splashes upon it. The white of the engobe tends to be warmish. Usually the engobe is applied thickly. Because this prevents the glaze from penetrating the body to make a secure cohesion, the glaze has often flaked off, frequently taking the engobe with it. The glaze, having a high content of lead, sometimes has a warm tone. It may also have a soap-bubble iridescence. Occasionally, due to the presence of a little copper, the glaze is greenish. It should be remembered that a piece with this peculiarity is not necessarily ancient. In fact, the greenish glaze is sometimes seen on modern pieces. Always the green tone diminishes the contrast between black and white. Generally, the vessels that have a pure white engobe and an absolutely colorless glaze are those that also excel in potting and decoration—an indication that the purity of the white was a desired effect. Pieces with this brilliant white have also been found in Transoxiana and are in the Samarkand museum. It seems likely that a true white engobe and colorless glaze were also produced in Afrasiyab, though no wasters with these qualities have been found there.

The black of the Nishapur ware is rarely absolute. Often it is purplish, because of the presence of manganese, or brownish, because of the presence of iron.

The Nishapur vessels are of many shapes and sizes, including circular platters, bowls, dishes, cups, lamps, jars, and pitchers. The quality of the potting varies considerably. Many of the finest pieces have thin, straight walls and are gracefully shaped, but some bowls that have thin sides are ill shaped, and some that are heavily potted, on the other hand, are well formed. Most of the bases are at least slightly concave, and many have a low bevel. The groove, or two concentric grooves, as found

in the buff ware, does not occur. A few of the bowls, however, have a rather thick foot ring, its outer surface vertical, its inner surface sloped. Only exceptionally is there a foot ring cleanly turned with two vertical faces.

As indicated at the outset, the decoration of this ware is distinctly different from that of the two preceding groups. The difference involves more than the limitation of the colors to white and black or near black: it lies in a fundamentally different approach. Instead of covering every part of the vessel's surface, the decoration occupies relatively small areas. In many of the bowls and dishes only the rim and the center of the bottom are decorated, and this decoration is often of the simplest sort. A distinguishing feature between the wares of Afrasiyab and Nishapur is to be seen in one type of the wave and dot border motif. Peculiar to Afrasiyab, and perhaps other sites in Transoxiana, is a type of this design in which the dots and waves, connected with the enclosing horizontal bands by a short incised line, cut through the black. The rim may have only a black line (6, 10, 15, and others), a combination of such a line and a number of small triangles (58, 64), or occasionally only the triangles (66). A sawtooth pattern at the rim is very common. It may be continuous (9, 90, and others), or it may be applied in short lengths (13, 85, 86). A line with dots or with very short strokes added beneath it is sometimes placed beneath the sawtooth (11, 61). Often combined with the sawtooth is a wave and dot pattern, again either as a continuous band (12) or in short lengths (4). Some of these features, such as the sawtooth and the dotted line, appear in other Nishapur wares, though less frequently than here.

Another decoration painted around the rim, a solid rectangle of black, seems peculiar to this ware. Having a labellike appearance, it may be seen three, four, or five times, or, combined with other decorations (4), only twice. In some cases these "labels" have an additional line painted beneath them (1, 56) or else a line with added dots or short strokes (2, 4). The purpose of such additions was perhaps to make the transition from the black to the white less abrupt.

Labels also occur on the black on white ware of Afrasiyab, with certain differences, as revealed in the fragments in the Islamisches Museum, Berlin. The lower edge of the Afrasiyab label is usually furnished with a small sawtooth, beneath which is a row of dots, not strokes. Other Afrasiyab labels have a row of short slanting strokes starting from a faint upper line. The rims of platters so adorned curve over and downward, with the labels so placed at the top of the curve—a form not discovered in Nishapur. Still another Afrasiyab label is supplemented underneath with a red line with circular red dots touching it on the underside.

The designs so far mentioned are painted either at the rim or closely adjacent to it, forming, as it were, a downward extension. Quite as characteristic in this ware, however, is a decorative band encircling the wall not far below the rim. This is often in the form of a leafy pattern or else of a Kufic inscription or pseudo inscription. These were usually painted directly in black; less often they appear in reserve, the motifs in white within a band of black. Only occasionally were leafy patterns and inscriptional forms, two separate types of decoration, mixed to fill one area (31). This mixed form, in white reserved on black, is commoner in Nishapur than in Afrasiyab. Some of the leafy forms drawn in black are very simple, consisting of nothing but single leaves on either side of an undulating stem (78). Others are more ambitious and employ the technique of scratching white lines through the black pigment (74). When such forms are drawn in reserve they may either be a series of separate leaves, each with its own stem (8), or a series of gracefully curving leaves growing one out of the other (82).

It will be found that the restraint, or even sparseness, of the decoration on the rim and wall is usually matched on the bottom. On a few vessels there is no decoration here at all. Generally there is at least a single spot or a curled stroke of black, a trilobed budlike form, a motif of two L-like strokes drawn back to back, or a version of the Chinese *yang-yin*. This last, one of the few borrowings from Chinese art to be seen in this ware, usually occurs in decadent form, resembling a pair of tadpoles (6). Among the more elaborate center decorations one finds an interlaced knot that may also be interpreted as a swastika (19) and an unambiguous swastika with elaborately developed arms (26). Foliate motifs are commonly used as central decorations. These are generally made into formal patterns, regardless of their degree of elaboration. Some appear in pairs in an S-shape (81), others in fours (76, 77). Nonsymmetrical treatments of such motifs are found less frequently.

One of the most distinctive center decorations of the black on white vessels is a bird, either ducklike or, less commonly, cranelike. The first, usually small and highly stylized, may consist of little more than a couple of merging strokes of black with a beaklike addition (65), though it often has dots added below for feet (90) and on its back to represent curled feathers (66). The cranelike bird, with long neck and long legs, is also highly stylized. It is usually embellished with foliate forms, these sometimes serving as wings (64, 68), sometimes as a crest (15), or appearing as a half-leaf in the bird's beak (13, 15). The bird's legs often have a meaningless addition of two dots. This cranelike bird seems to have been more popular as a ceramic decoration in Nishapur than anywhere else. Occasionally the small bird in the center of the bowl

is drawn in a more naturalistic way (69), and on some bowls, drawn on a much bigger scale, a bird may be the predominant decoration (10). Since 1940 a number of black on white bowls have appeared on which large birds are painted in pairs; some of these are mentioned in the comments at 10. This type of design, in which an animate form covers a large part of the interior, is not confined to representations of birds. A bowl was found on which a man apparently rides a horned animal (67), and still another (a badly eroded fragment, not illustrated) was decorated with portions of a wolflike animal against a ground of fine curling lines with superimposed dots, this background treatment reminiscent of that on certain imported monochrome luster pieces (Group 6, 35b).

A great deal of the decoration in this ware, as in the other slip-painted wares of Nishapur, consists of Arabic inscriptions. An appreciation of this decoration depends to some extent on an understanding of the importance in the Islamic world of written Arabic. The Koran, revealed by the angel Gabriel in Arabic, directly from God to Muhammad, was the very core of Islam, its authority absolute in religion, law, and way of life. It is therefore not surprising that, following the Arab conquest of the Near East, Arabic script became dominant in Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Egypt. The supreme importance of the language and the script, rather than any inherent superiority of the script itself, accounted for its superseding the scripts used for Syriac, Greek, Coptic, and Pahlavi. It has been said that the sole contribution of the Arabs to Islamic art was calligraphy (A. H. Christie, "Islamic Minor Arts and Their Influence upon European Work," in *The Legacy of Islam*, T. Arnold and A. Guillaume, eds. Oxford, 1943, p. 113). Even if this statement be qualified, the fact remains that Arabic has proved one of the most adaptable scripts for decorative purposes ever invented. The close connection of Arabic with the Koran caused the extraordinarily wide use of the script in all forms of decoration, ranging from that on tiny amulets to great buildings. And the connection explains why, in the Islamic world, calligraphy was considered a most worthy art, in fact, *the* most worthy art. The creative talents of the best calligraphers, who came from several nations and worked in many different centers, led to an unparalleled variety of calligraphic forms and styles. These did not, as is sometimes thought, evolve from one primitive "Kufic" script—the name given generally and loosely to several different types of a simple, rather angular script with horizontal connections, such as are to be seen on the parchment pages of early Korans, on funerary monuments, and in architectural inscriptions. Contemporary with this "Kufic" was a cursive script with more fluid outlines and curved connections. Each, it has been pointed out, influenced the other (Rice, *The Unique Ibn*

al-Bawwāb Manuscript in the Chester Beatty Library, p. 3). Whether elaborate or simple, Arabic script, irrespective of its verbal content, is often beautiful. Each type has its particular charm. During the period under study here—from the ninth to the twelfth century—there was an increasing interest in elaboration. This tendency is reflected in ceramic art, especially in the slip-painted wares of eastern Iran and Transoxiana. However, the presence on a bowl of a simple script does not of itself imply an early date. Simple and elaborate calligraphy were in use at the same time in ceramics and in other media. It may be said, though, that great calligraphic elaboration was not prevalent before the end of the tenth century. It was during the first half of the eleventh century that the script was often overweighted with ornament (Pope, *Survey*, II, p. 1723, fig. 588).

In the ware considered here, the legibility of the inscription sometimes depends upon the style of the writing. Although added ornament may affect legibility, it does not follow that script without ornament is always easy to read. Not only ornament but the letters' modifying signs may be absent. The omission of these marks reduces the number of different letters from twenty-eight to fourteen, with a concomitant increase in the number of possible readings. The problem was recognized long ago by the scholar al-Biruni (973–1048), who remarked that "Arabic writing has a great drawback. It contains letters identical in their forms. They are easily confused, and there results the need for diacritical marks to distinguish those letters from each other" (quoted in Rosenthal, *Ars Orientalis*, IV, p. 22). The omission of the marks is not confined to inscriptions in a simple hand, but may as easily occur in those that are highly decorated with knottings, volutes, and other ornamental features. The potter, in embellishing his wares, often sacrificed legibility to achieve decorative balance. This was done, for example, by changing the form and relative size of certain letters to establish an even rhythm of short and tall, as on 19. This custom was also not unknown in manuscripts (Dimand, *Handbook*, fig. 40).

But illegibility in ceramic inscriptions can occur for an entirely different reason, namely illiteracy. Some of the Nishapur potters, not truly knowing how to write, produced a simulated script that bears only a superficial resemblance to accurate writing. Thus, many vessels are decorated with groups of letters that only approximate such favorite inscriptions as *barakeh* (blessing) and *yumn* (happiness). Furthermore, there was a tendency among illiterate potters to draw certain letters backward, as in mirror writing. This practice occurs particularly in the animate buff ware (Group 1, 63, among others) and the opaque white ware (Group 6, 12, 13). Still another confusing practice was to add diacritical marks where they

are not needed. Sometimes the writing is so debased that it is not possible to guess what the simulated formulas are meant to represent. Actually, the borderline between comprehension of a verbal meaning and acceptance of simply a pattern may have been as vague to the Nishapurians and others as it often is to those of us who study their ceramics. One thing we can be certain of: when some of these calligraphic forms were adopted in the arts of Christendom, as happened not infrequently, their meaning was invariably left behind.

Several distinct treatments of Arabic lettering are to be observed in the black on white ware, and, to a lesser degree, in other wares of Nishapur. Most of the treatments are not confined to glazed pottery but occur in other media, including textiles. Despite certain limitations of the weaving medium, many close parallels occur in contemporary textiles, notably those found in Egypt, where they have been best preserved. These parallels include the extreme lengthening of verticals, the addition of triangular forms to the extremities of many letters, and the use of a miniature script that gives the impression of bristles springing from a horizontal line. The nature of slip painting facilitates the addition of certain embellishments such as changes of width, curves, and foliations. A particular possibility in slip painting on a white engobe was the scratching of fine lines through the dark pigment to the white engobe beneath. Such lines were used to produce interwoven and knotted effects. When skillfully done, this gives an impression of elegance and precision, unobtainable by simple painting. Found on many of the Nishapur black on white bowls, the scratching technique seems to have been practiced to an even greater extent in Transoxiana.

The shape of many of the black on white bowls has a direct effect on their calligraphic decoration. The flaring sides make the rim diameter much greater than the bottom diameter, and, as a result, the lettering is often written with the mass near the rim and the verticals converging toward the bottom. The same procedure is used on platters with a shallow central well. The alternative, on bowls, was to paint the lettering right side up in a compact band around the wall. When the lettering is inverted the prolonged verticals are exploited decoratively, perhaps crossing one another in an arbitrary fashion (20) or repeating the downward extensions in a pattern of ones and twos (34). Lettering based at the rim is sometimes continuous (17, 25-27, and others), sometimes divided into groups (19, 20, 32, and others). The tips of the verticals may end simply, or they may slope to form a point on one side (51), the latter a treatment also to be seen in Afrasiyab. A common practice, not confined to Nishapur, was to bend the tips of the verticals to one side, in effect weighting the extremities, thus helping to

balance the top and bottom of the lettering. The bent tips of the verticals may also be neatly bifurcated (17, 19, 26, 30). This feature appears only in vessels of good quality and with precisely drawn script. Such vessels have also been found in Afrasiyab. The bending of the tops of many verticals, so that a rotating-wheel effect is produced (Pézard, *Céramique*, pl. xciv, lower right) seems to have been a peculiarity of Afrasiyab. In another version the tops of the verticals, heavily counterweighted, are made to resemble feet, and the added weight of this and other decoration, generally in the form of foliated extensions, becomes as heavy as the base of the letters at the rim. The vertical strokes in this type of writing have humps added to them near the middle, making them appear wavy (52, 53).

In contrast to these styles, with their precision, cursive grace, and ornamentation, an almost brutal style is to be seen on poorly made vessels. It is a degeneration of the bold style, so like that in early Korans, with a thin line continuing from one side of the broad vertical stroke. This is exemplified on 36, a bowl probably imported from Gurgan, where this type of script was common in slip-painted wares. The fashion also prevailed farther west, along the south shores of the Caspian, and it occurs in the Ghaznavid site of Lashkari Bazar. It is found, too, in Afrasiyab. Since it occurs but rarely in Nishapur, it seems likely that such vessels found there were imports.

Although an inverted calligraphic decoration proved an excellent adornment for bowls and platters, many black on white bowls have inscriptions whose base is toward the bottom of the bowl. In such cases the treatment of the lettering is generally different, the calligraphy forming a compact decorative band. The heavily decorated type of inverted writing seen on 53—and that on 54, where the inscription runs laterally across a bowl—may be considered as bridging the two treatments. The compactness of the decorative bands is achieved in two ways: either by weighting the upper part of the letters or by making the inscriptions white in reserve on a black band. In the first case the verticals are shortened and the forms made triangular (24), or, in a more graceful style, the heads of the letters are refined to look leaflike or flowerlike (14). In the second case, when the lettering is in reserve, such elaborations are not called for, since the black band makes the writing compact (5). Such bands of inscription, the base of the letters toward the bottom, might be used as a short panel (22) or as a tall, comparatively narrow panel with the words several times repeated, one line above another (21). These decorative bands of writing are ordinarily placed halfway up the side of the bowl, especially when the inscription is in black on white. When the inscription is in reserve, the band may be placed higher, near the rim.

Just as writing takes the place of other decoration near the rim of many black on white bowls, it often appears in the center of the bottom. A favorite treatment was to place the inscription straight across the bottom. A favorite inscription for this use in Nishapur, seen on 24 and 27, was *ahmad* (may he do that which is praiseworthy), whereas the favorite word in Afrasiyab, also much used in Iraq, was *barakeh* (blessing). The *ahmad*, which is not to be mistaken for the name of a potter, is so frequent in the bowls found in Nishapur that it can almost be re-

garded as a sign of Nishapur manufacture.

Inscriptions, usually of the compact style, and usually of a debased, illegible sort, are sometimes placed radially in a bowl (23) and sometimes made to cross a bowl from rim to rim (50, 54). When inscriptions are used on the exterior of black on white pieces—dishes, pitchers, jars—the problem presented by the shape of the interior does not exist. Accordingly, the inscriptions encircle the pieces right side up whether they be well written (72) or so poorly written as to be merely a pattern (73).

1 BOWL

D 30, H 8.3 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.273

Strongly reddish clay, white engobe, slightly green glaze. Base concave and deeply beveled. As is usual in this ware, the base is covered with engobe but not with glaze. On the interior, spaced around the rim, four brownish black rectangular "labels," each with an underline connected at the ends. On the bottom, a U-shaped stroke of pigment.

Closely related is a much smaller bowl (56). Similar "labels" were found on the rims of platters having a central well; one such was found with a bird motif in the center. Labels also appear in the black on white ware of Afrasiyab (Stoliarov Photograph 1, row C, no. 7, page 366). Study sherds from Gurgan in the Metropolitan indicate that such labels also appeared in the black on white ware of that city; the bases of the Gurgan vessels have neither glaze nor engobe.

2 BOWL

D 30.7, H 8.6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Colorless glaze. Spaced around the rim, five brownish black labels, each of which is supplemented underneath by a fine line with superimposed dots, a device that occurs on many bowls in this ware (4, 11, 41, 61). A single dot ornaments the center of the bottom. A related bowl (fragmentary) in the Metropolitan (38.40.136) has five labels in purplish black, their lower edges scalloped and supplemented by groups of triple dots.

3 BOWL

D 21.7, H 7 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 40.170.127

Reddish buff body. Beveled base. Painting in brownish black. The major element of the decoration is an ornamental band, two lengths of which alternate at the rim

with triangular strokes of pigment; a simple two-leaved bud on the bottom and a dotted line beneath the lengths of band (compare "labels" on 2) complete the decoration. The band itself is derived from Kufic script, the model being the word *yumn* (happiness), repeated. For a simple version of the word in this ware, see 44; for a simple repeated version, 37. The addition of a spot at the top between the vertical strokes, as in the present example, causes the script to become decorative rather than meaningful. Compare 79, on which the added spots have become trefoils. Many similar bowls were found, suggesting strongly that they were made in Nishapur.

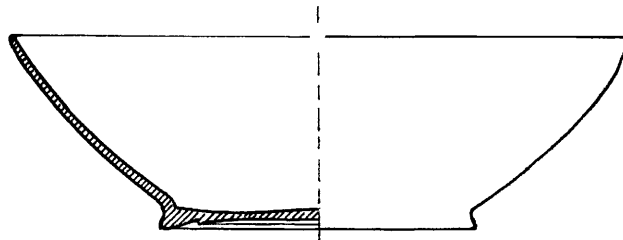
4 BOWL

D 16.4, H 5 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 40.170.123

Reddish body. Concave base. Decoration at the rim, in brownish black, consists of two opposing pairs, one unit a label with a line beneath it with added short, thick, vertical strokes, the other a length of wave and dot pattern beneath a length of sawtooth. In the center of the bowl is a plantlike form with three stems terminating in dots. The wave and dot motif in this ware can be considered a mark of Nishapur manufacture, not of Afrasiyab. Compare 12.

5 BOWL

D 24.8, H 7.6 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 36.20.61



1:3

The base, concave, is beveled. The exterior of the bowl is chattered. Chattering, in the unglazed ware of Nishapur, was often done purposely for a decorative effect; in this ware the slanting ridges are probably unintentional. The pigment, brownish black, has in places fired to a clear transparent brown. Beneath the sawtooth rim decoration is a band in which the word *barakeh* (blessing), in reserve, is repeated. The base of the word is toward the bottom of the bowl, a point discussed on page 93, and scrolls have been added to make the word a well-filled block of pattern. The bottom of the bowl is adorned with a disk of black with curls in reserve. The disk is enclosed by a line drawn with small projections. This outline recalls a device that appears on certain polychrome on white bowls (Group 4, 56, 58). Probably late tenth century.

Bowls with both wall and bottom decorated in reserve were not common in Nishapur. More usual was the combination of a decorative band in reserve on the wall and a simple black device on the bottom, as on 6. The painting of a central circular motif in reserve was also done in the black on white ware of other centers than Nishapur, namely Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 234, fig. 9, right) and Afrasiyab (Stoliarov Photograph 2, row B, no. 2, page 366). It continued after the tenth century, as indicated by the finds at Lashkari Bazar (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, pl. xviii, no. 270).

6 BOWL

D 21.3, H 6.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Beneath a plain band of black at the rim, an ornamental band based on a wave pattern drawn in a black line, the spaces being treated as trilobed forms in reserve, alternately upright and upside down. In order to make the play of the black and white more subtle, black dots break up the central lobes. The tadpolelike motifs on the bottom, placed "head" to "tail," may be considered a debased version of the *yang-yin*, a frequent motif in this ware. Found in a tenth-century location. Broken in antiquity, the bowl was considered valuable enough to be repaired; iron wire once passed through four holes that can be seen on one side. Fragments of similar bowls were found, some with a sawtooth rather than a plain line at the rim. A bowl found in Afrasiyab has a somewhat similar band of pattern in reserve, less carefully drawn (Stoliarov Photograph 2, row B, no. 1, page 366). Above it is a broad wavy band of a type unknown in Nishapur, and around the bottom is a heavy ring in black, a ring characteristic of Afrasiyab. This bowl has a strongly convex wall, a shape common in Transoxiana but rare in the black on white ware of Nishapur.

7 BOWL FRAGMENT

D of bowl 24 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.149

A decorative band containing a degenerate form of the word *barakeh* (blessing) in reserve. The word is treated so that it is made a continuous ring rather than, as on 5, a series of repeating blocks. The lettering also differs from that on 5 in that the tops of some of the letters follow the upper line. Furthermore, the reserved areas have added groups of two or three black spots. The black, a clear brown in some places, ran during firing. Fired inverted.

8 BOWL FRAGMENT

L 20.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 36.20.31

Beneath a sawtooth rim decoration, a decorative band consisting of a repeated leaflike form, in reserve on black, growing from an upcurved stem. Two black dots break up the light area of the leaf (compare dots on 6), a feature also encountered in the leafy decorations of the buff ware (Group 1, 21, 23). A complete bowl with a similar band of decoration, found after the close of the Museum's excavations and now in a private collection, has for its central decoration a motif of two half-palmettes in reserve, back to back, enclosing a "heart."

9 BOWL

D 35.3, H 12.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.153

Base concave with bevel. One of several bowls with flaring sides and very simple decoration, here a degenerate, undeciphered inscription on the bottom and a sawtooth rim. The black is brownish. Such pieces were often, like this one, of considerable size. Some have no decoration on the bottom; others have a small bird (90).

10 BOWL (restored)

D 32.7, H 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.69

The base, which has a flat bevel, is covered with a thin wash of engobe, the usual treatment. The decoration consists of a bird with an ornamental pseudo inscription (now incomplete) issuing from its beak. The pigment has in places fused to a dark brown. The dark area of the bird's body has been broken by a wide, curving, reserved band descending from the neck. This is reminiscent of the reserved bands that occur on many of the birds and animals in the buff ware (Group 1, 62, among others). Although many bowls of the present ware are decorated with birds (13-15, 63-66, 68-70, 89, 90), no bowl was found with a bird of larger size than this one in proportion to the diameter of the vessel.

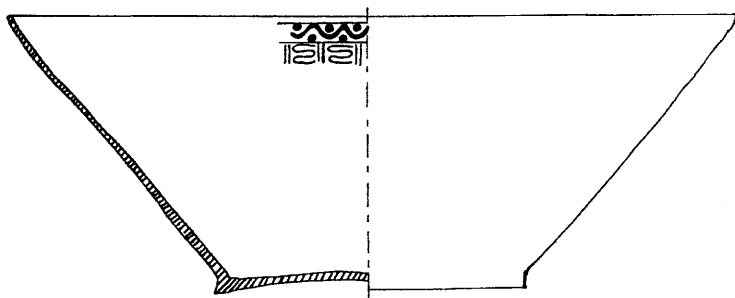
Since 1940 many bowls have come to light, reputedly from Nishapur, decorated with pairs of large birds, their wings containing half-palmettes in reserve and a short, debased inscription (*Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, fig.

4; Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, XIV, p. 12, fig. 7; *Olsen Collection of Persian Pottery*, sale catalogue, Sotheby & Co., June 8, 1964, no. 76). Some have been found, too, without the inscription (*ibid.*, no. 77). A black on white bowl found in Afrasiyab has a pair of small birds with a pseudo-Kufic word painted in the reserved areas of their bodies (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. xxiii, bottom left).

11 BOWL

D 32, H 11 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Red body, turned thin. Chattering on exterior. Colorless glaze, eroded. The rim decoration, drawn with exceptional delicacy, consists of a sawtooth with two circumscribing lines beneath it, the lower one adorned with bristlelike strokes. Decorating the bottom is a double L-like device resembling an *alef* and a *lam* joined by two thin strokes. A related bowl of larger size, with straight walls decorated with a band of pseudo script beneath the wave and dot pattern, was found in Tepe Madraseh. This



form of decorative writing suggests that the ware was made at least as late as the end of the tenth century.

12 BOWL (base restored)

D 26, H 8.9 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 36.20.28

A sawtooth at the rim, the typical and popular wave and dot pattern beneath it (compare 4). Originally there was doubtless a dot or other simple device on the bottom. As there is considerable variety in such decoration, speculation about the origin of this piece is idle.

13 BOWL

D 23.75, H 7.3 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.142

Base concave with bevel. Spur marks on both bottom and base. Pigment brownish black. At the rim, the word *Allah*,

reduced to a pattern of three verticals of diminishing height followed by an elaborate flourish. This device appears twice. The rest of the rim, decorated at one point by a length of sawtooth, carries a black line. Other pieces were found with such inscriptions, sometimes in a group of three. The practice of reducing the height of adjacent vertical letters, common throughout the tenth century, occurs in other Nishapur wares (Group 8, 10, 11), but it was by no means confined to pottery. It occurs, for example, on cloth bearing the name of Caliph Muqtadir (908–932) (E. Kühnel, "Aus fünf Jahrtausenden Morgenländischer Kultur," in *Festschrift Max Freiherrn von Oppenheim*, Berlin, 1933, p. 61, pl. II, fig. 1). On the bottom of 13 is a cranelike bird of a type seen often in this ware (15, 64, 68). Although the treatment here is typically Samanid, the motif of a bird holding a leaf in its beak goes back to the Sasanian period; it occurs, for example, on a silver dish of about A.D. 400 in the Metropolitan (Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, April, 1960, p. 267, fig. 32). Birds with a leaf in their beak also occur in the Nishapur buff ware (Group 1, 74, 82, 88) and on imitation monochrome luster pieces (Group 6, 45, 47, 48). On some of the black on white bowls the leaf was apparently thought of as a wing, and it is found attached to the bird's breast by means of a curling line (14). Small protuberant marks appear on the legs of the bird on 13, on the leaf in its beak, and on the flourishes following the inscriptions. Such additions are typical of the Nishapur black on white ware (63, 66, 68, 81).

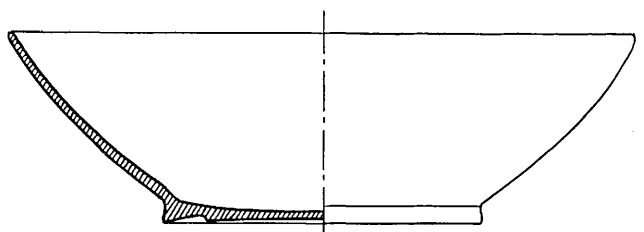
14 BOWL (restored)

D 20.5, H 6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.69

Beveled base. On the wall, in brownish black, a decorative band consisting of the word *barakeh* (blessing), repeated. The verticals, not unduly prolonged, are elaborately decorated in flowerlike forms. As is customary in this kind of band, the bases of the letters are toward the bottom of the bowl. This style of inscription appears also on circular platters (none illustrated) and small dishes (63). The bird on the bottom of 14 gives a phoenixlike impression. What appear to be its wings, however, are merely decorative appendages, one attached to the bottom of its neck, the other an extension of its tail. The foliate tips of these appendages echo the finials of some of the letters. Possibly made by the same Nishapur potter who made 15 and 63. Several similar bowls were found; others, reputedly from Nishapur, have appeared since 1940 (*Ceramic Art of Iran Exhibition Catalogue*, no. 35). On some of these vessels the bird is replaced by a *yang-yin* or a device resembling two capital L's placed back to back. The latter device, not always confined to the center, appears on other black and white vessels.

15 BOWL

D 24, H 7.6 cm ; vicinity of Omar Khayyam
MMA 36.20.62

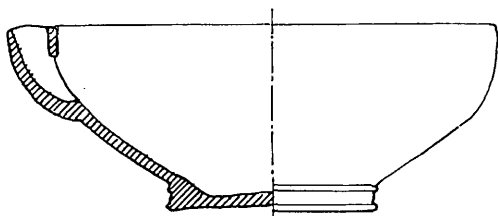


1:3

Base concave with bevel. Sides somewhat convex. Rim decorated with a simple line. Halfway down the wall, a circumscribing band of close-knit writing consisting of the words *al barakeh* (blessing), repeated. The letters have hammerlike finials. The style is less well developed than on 14, although the bowls were possibly made by the same potter. In the center, a bird with two leafy appendages, one hanging from its mouth (compare 13), the other growing from its head like a crest. Many similar bowls were unearthed.

16 a,b SPOUTED BOWL

D 18, H 7.4 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.93



1:3

Shown unrestored (16a) and with bridge across spout reconstructed (16b). The base, concave, is covered with engobe but is not glazed. The inscription that crosses the bottom is a typical example of Samanid epigraphy and is

to be read *al mulk lillah* (sovereignty is God's). Beneath the inscription is a small, crudely drawn bird, reminiscent of others in this ware. Spouted bowls were also made in the graffiato color-splashed ware, but no complete example was found. Spouted black on white bowls have also been found at Ctesiphon; one of the ninth century is in the Metropolitan (32.150.260).

17 PLATTER

D 42, H 6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.29

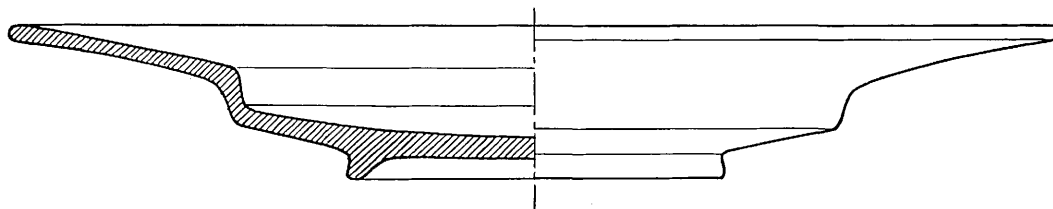
Base has a well-turned foot ring. Decoration consists entirely of an inscription, so far not read. As on bowls with flaring sides, the bases of the letters are placed at the rim. The tips of the elongated verticals, bent to the left, are bifurcated, a treatment seen on a number of related pieces (16, 19, 30). A platter resembling this one, except that its letters are taller and not bifurcated, was found at Afrasiyab (Stoliarov Photograph 3, row A, no. 3, page 367). From another part of Tepe Madraseh came a fragment of a platter inscribed with part of the words *al sahibeh* (friendship):



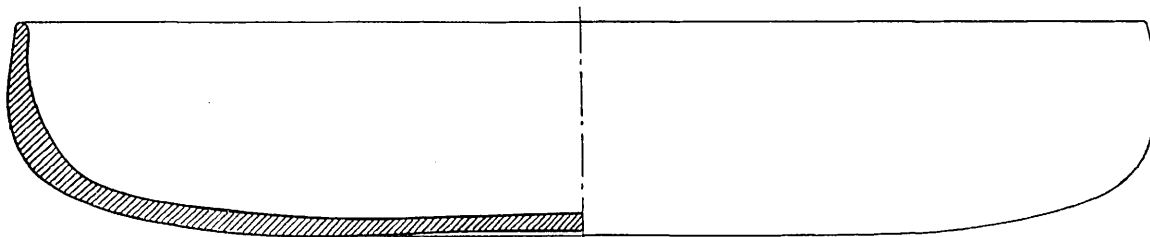
18 DISH FRAGMENT

D 46, H 8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.246

Made without a base. The absence of a foot ring in dishes of high quality is also to be found in the opaque white ware (Group 6, 4). The outside is covered with engobe and glaze. A brilliant piece: the engobe pure white, the



17 1:3



18 1:3

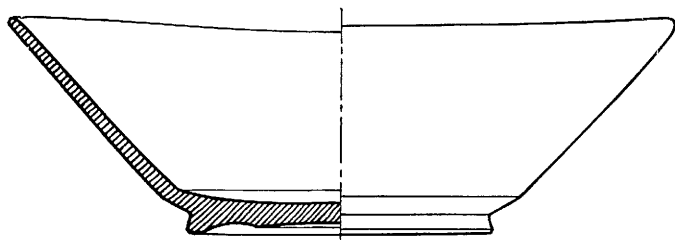
pigment of the decoration an intense black that held its place well when fired, the glaze without tint. In the center, an asymmetrical design of intertwining stems with curling pointed tendrils, compact trefoils, and palmettes in the form of cinquefoils. Fine white lines have been scratched through the black to indicate the details. Similar cinquefoils occur on a brilliant polychrome on white bowl (Group 4, 9) whose decoration includes lettering in a style that goes back to the early tenth century. This suggests that 18 is of the tenth century also.

Trefoils drawn in the technique of 18 but on a smaller scale are to be seen on 74, a piece from the same pottery. A smaller dish than 18, found in Nishapur after the close of the Museum's excavations (*Sept mille ans d'art en Iran* Exhibition Catalogue, pl. CI, no. 904), is so similar in drawing to 18 that it must have been made by the same potter. Around its rim is a Kufic inscription in a style suggesting the ninth or tenth century.

In Afrasiyab small jars were made in a style closely related to these pieces (Sarre, *Pantheon*, XVII, p. 158). The idea of decorating the interior of a dish with a running design of stems and leaves goes back to the Sasanian period or the period immediately following it, as exemplified in a silver dish in the Toledo Museum of Art (Joseph Brummer sale catalogue, Parke-Bernet, New York, April 20, 1949, no. 88, ill.).

19 BOWL

D 27.5, H 8.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.25



1:3

Base has a shallow groove rather than a bevel, an uncommon feature in this ware. The engobe is thickly applied over the entire vessel, including the base, which shows the marks of a stilt. The glaze is free of color, and the black decoration, an inscription divided into four units around a central circle and ornament, produces a brilliant effect. The inscription consists of five words, their bases toward the rim, the tops of the vertical extensions bent to the left and bifurcated (compare 17). Beginning at the right and proceeding clockwise, one may read the message as: *man kathara kalamahu kathara saqtahu* (He who talks a lot, spills a lot). The painter, having a good eye for balance, diminished the height of the *kaf* in the lowest group by half, preceding the two tall strokes of the *lam-alef*. The

heavy black line encircling the bottom of the bowl was a popular decoration in wares of Afrasiyab. The central device offers an excellent example of how a black on white design can be seen in two different ways. It may be interpreted either as two tightly interlocked links, defined by white hairlines scratched through the pigment, or as a swastika drawn in white upon a limited background, with a black dot added at the end of each arm. Both motifs are ancient. Without the added dots in the corners, the device appears on a tenth-century graffiato bowl from western Iran (Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 583 B). In Nishapur the device was used in carved brick decorations of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

A bowl resembling 19 but far inferior in quality was found in Afrasiyab (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. VI). Its inscription, which conveys a different message, is divided into four groups, and its letters are less well drawn; the tops of the vertical extensions are bent, as on 19, but are not bifurcated. The central ornament, placed inside the black circle typical of Afrasiyab wares, consists of four roughly drawn petals. The rarity of such pieces in both Nishapur and Afrasiyab makes it difficult to decide their place of origin. Without evidence directly from kilns, still lacking, it would be rash to say that 19 was or was not imported, even though the black ring suggests importation.

20 BOWL

D 34, H 10.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

In contrast to 19, the engobe is so sparingly applied that the vessel's surface is streaked with brown. The inscription, so far unread, but probably a maxim after the fashion of the one on 19, is divided into five units. A treatment not seen on 17 or 19 is introduced: some of the vertical letters cross one another. The effect is purely decorative. The bottom of the bowl is adorned with a simple spot of pigment. Fragments of another bowl found by the expedition had the same style of writing, but more loosely drawn, the inscription consisting of the word *Allah*, repeated.

21 BOWL (minor restoration)

D 38, H 11 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.101

One of the largest bowls of this ware found. The base, beveled, is covered with engobe and is sparingly glazed. The glaze is faintly greenish. The decoration on the interior consists of the inscription *barakeh we barr* (blessing and beneficence), painted four times to make a wide radial band on one wall. The letters, their bases toward the bottom, end in triangular forms; for more exaggerated versions, see 24, 40. Ninth-century location.

22 BOWL

D 20.1, H 8.9 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.118

The near edge (as well as the base) is restored, so it is not possible to say whether the decoration, an inscription drawn in a bold fashion, was repeated. The words are *al mulk lillah* (sovereignty is God's). The script has a number of peculiarities. The *lillah* is not fully written out, one vertical being omitted. By no means unique, this treatment occurs in an eleventh-century drawing (Wiet, *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égypte*, XIX, pl. 1). The letter *mim* is embellished by two addorsed half-palmettes. The decoration of this letter, sometimes done to make the writing a more solid band, was a widespread practice. It is to be seen, for example, on ninth-century Cairene gravestones (Hassan, *Al-fann al-Islāmī fī Miṣr*, I, pl. 20). The central element of the three half-palmettes on 22 is drawn as a berry on a thin stalk. This berrylike addition occurs also in the Nishapur ware decorated with yellow-staining black (Group 8, 9, 29). Furthermore, it is known in the decoration of imitation luster ware (Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, X, p. 8, fig. 5). The three bristlelike additions on the solitary half-palmette to the left have a parallel in the imitation monochrome luster of Nishapur (Group 6, 46), where the additions are two instead of three. The use of lateral projections at the tops of the tall letters on 22 continued into the Ghaznavid period and appears in the glazed pottery of Lashkari Bazar (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, p. 64, fig. 49, nos. 8, 9).

23 BOWL (bottom restored)

D 26, H 7.6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 37.40.2

Decoration of three radial lines of inscription and three or possibly four small triangles at the rim. The inscriptions repeat the word *barakeh* (blessing) in a style that would appear to be a decadent version of 14 and 16. Contrary to the rules of Arabic calligraphy, a line has been added beneath the letters, joining them together. A similar though usually even more decadent style of writing occurs in the opaque white ware made in Nishapur (Group 6, 17).

24 a,b BOWL

D 31, H 9.7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Base has the usual bevel. Black has a brown tinge. At the rim, a sawtooth. Around the wall, an inscription reading [*bara*]keh we yumn sarur we . . . we sa'[adet?] (blessing and prosperity and joy and . . . happiness). This style of script, the letters having large wedge-shaped tops, their bases invariably toward the bottom of the bowl, was found on a number of black on white pieces (compare 40). It is also to be seen in Egyptian textiles of the Tulunid period (ninth century) (Dimand, *Handbook*, fig. 162). On the bottom of 24 is the word *ahmad*, doubtless not intended as a name but in the sense of "May he do that which is praiseworthy." A peculiarity here is the birdlike appearance of the letter *ha*. Hints of this treatment occur on other Nishapur bowls (27, 29) and also are found elsewhere, as in the eleventh-century black on white ware of Lashkari Bazar (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, pl. XIII, no. 157). If these examples can be considered meaningful drawings of a bird as well as a letter, so can that seen in *ibid.*, fig. 49, no. 5, p. 64, although in a very different

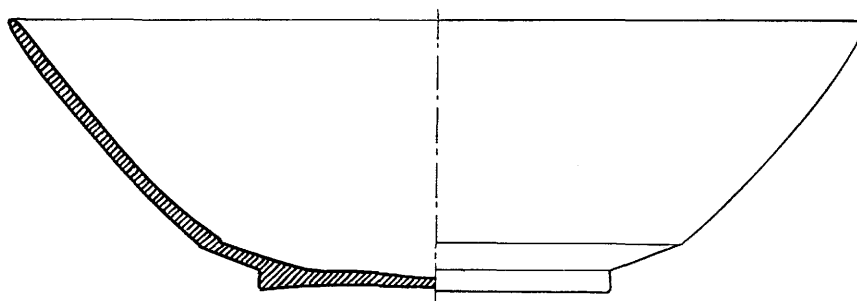


style. On the other hand, it may be noted that on a Nishapur bowl very similar to 24 (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 15A) the suggestion of a bird is lacking, there being merely a V-shaped connection between the *ha* and the *mim*. (For another example, see Ettinghausen, *Ars Orientalis*, II, p. 357.) Although an intentional resemblance cannot be ruled out, it is more likely that the "bird" is often only an accidental effect. 24 came from a location suggesting manufacture in the tenth century. For suggestions of birds in the word *barakeh* on black and white ware, see *ibid.*, pl. 8, fig. 23.

25 a,b BOWL

D 32.7, H 9.7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.105

Base slightly concave, sides convex. The black, heavily

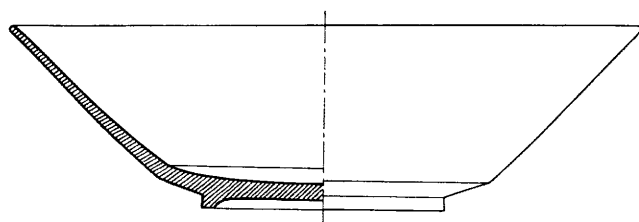


25 1:3

loaded with clay, varies from brownish to purplish. In places where the glaze has spalled, the pigment remains intact. Half-moons take the place of the usual sawtooth at the rim. A heavy black ring encircles the bottom, which is without a central ornament. The inscription, not completely read, includes the word *barakeh* (blessing). The bases of the letters are toward the rim, the tops of the tall letters bifurcated (compare 17, 19, 26, 30). Fine straight lines have been substituted for the usual diacritical dots. The shape of the bowl, the color of its pigment, the half-moons at the rim, and the circle around the bottom—all typical of Afrasiyab—indicate an import.

26 BOWL FRAGMENT

D of bowl (estimated) 33.7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.494



1:4

Another portion of this bowl is in the Teheran museum. Reddish body. Base, turned very thin, has a foot ring. Engobe, pure white, covers entire vessel, including base. Glaze, colorless and crackled, covers all but the base. The black has a brown tinge at the edges. Around the wall, an inscription (unread), its base toward the rim. The tops of the tall letters are bifurcated. There are no diacritical marks. On the bottom of the bowl, a boldly drawn swastika with twice-folded extensions ending in foliate forms. Stilt marks present.

The swastika with extended arms carries on a tradition established in arts other than ceramic of the Parthians (W. Andrae & H. Lenzen, *Die Partherstadt Assur*, Leipzig, 1933, pl. 41a), the Sasanians (Pope, *Survey*, I, p. 606, fig. 181), and the Umayyads (Hamilton, *Khirbat al Mafjar*, fig. 225). Its occurrence in the present ware indicates an artistic borrowing from other centers. In a somewhat debased form it continued in the Ghaznavid black on white ware of the eleventh century (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, pl. xviii, no. 246). The swastika on 26 has been construed by Don Aanavi, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, May, 1968, p. 355, fig. 5) as four *kafs*, representing one of the names of God: *al-Kafi* (the Sufficient); however, since swastikas with prolonged arms were a favorite motif in Islamic decoration, and since it was not the custom to put the names of God but rather expressions of thanks or blessing in the bottom of a domestic vessel, it would seem that a swastika, rather than an interlacing of *kafs*, was in the designer's mind. Swastikas, linked with dotted bands and half-palmettes, occur

on a ninth-century molded dish of Iraq (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 5B).

27 BOWL

D (estimated) 38, H 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Around the wall, an unread inscription in brownish black, beginning and ending at a bell-shaped ornamental device. Varying in shape, such "starting devices" are found on many Nishapur black on white bowls decorated with inscriptions, especially those having the word *ahmad* (as does 27) on the bottom. For comment on the birdlike shape of the *ha* in the *ahmad*, see 24. Bell-shaped devices also occur on Afrasiyab bowls (Bolshakov, *Eastern Epigraphy*, XII, p. 27, fig. 3).

28 BOWL FRAGMENT

D 25.4 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.154

Around the wall, drawn in a somewhat loose style but with diacritical marks present, an unread inscription in brownish black. For decorative reasons the *alef* in the first word crosses the *lam-alef*. The crossings have been defined by white lines scratched through the black, a treatment not seen in the crossing letters of 20. A simple circle, rather than a "bell," as on 27, marks the beginning of the inscription. The word *ahmad* doubtless appeared on the bottom. Several bowls in the style of this one have been found since 1940 (Wilkinson, *Iranian Ceramics*, pl. 20). A somewhat similar bowl, obviously by a different hand, was found in Afrasiyab (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. III; Stoliarov Photograph 3, row A, no. 1, page 367).

29 BOWL FRAGMENT

D 24.8 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 39.40.16

Around the wall, starting at a tuliplike form, an unread inscription, in style somewhat like 28 but with the bent tops of the letters not so prolonged. As on 28, the initial *alef* crosses the *lam-alef*, with the same scratching of white lines to define the crossing. On the bottom, the beginning of the word *ahmad*, with birdlike *ha*, as on 24, 27.

30 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 25 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Around the wall, an inscription in purplish black, more precisely drawn than those of 28 and 29. The style is

quite different, the *kafs*, for example, being drawn with the two horizontal elements very close together, as on 19. The tops of the letters, bent more gracefully than those of 28 and 29, are bifurcated (compare 17, 19, 26). Some of the letters cross, but the crossings are merely painted, as on 16, not defined by scratched lines, as on 28 and 29.

31 PLATTER FRAGMENT

W 14 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.480

The engobe was thickly applied. As a result of complete disintegration of the glaze, one sees clearly the scratched white lines that provide the detail in the black painting. Among the details defined by these lines is a group of vertical letters near the rim, the tops of which give the impression that they overlap. The principal decoration consists of palmettes, curling stems, and four-petaled rosettes. (For another occurrence of the rosette, see 53.) The palmettes are different from those seen on another vessel (18) in that they have pointed rather than indented tips. This style of lettering was not used before the tenth century. Pointed palmettes occur in the twelfth-century alkaline-glazed ware of Nishapur (Group 11, 10), and they also occur on eleventh- or twelfth-century graffiato bowls made elsewhere in Iran (Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, X, p. 14, fig. 19).

32 BOWL

D 32, H 10.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Brownish black decoration under a faintly yellow glaze. An inscription, or perhaps a pseudo inscription, appears on opposite walls, rising from a base line drawn near the rim. Between the two lengths of inscription is an isolated *alef*, doubtless repeated on the opposite wall (compare 33). On the bottom, a simple U-shaped curl, a device used both in Nishapur and Afrasiyab. A detail not hitherto illustrated is the projection of an added line above the solid stroke of the vertical letters. This is also to be seen on 35 and (a coarser version) 36.

33 BOWL

D 25.2, H 7.6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Made by the same potter who made 32. Thinly turned. Glaze much eroded. As on 32, a length of "inscription" in brownish black appears twice, based on a line near the rim. The inscriptions alternate with single *alefs*. On the bottom, a U-shaped curl, as on 32.

34 BOWL

D 25.2, H 7.6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Around the rim, a poorly drawn pseudo inscription in purplish black. The tall "letter" alternating with a pair of closely placed verticals may represent a deviation from the word *yumn* (happiness). Lengths of an imprecise decoration consisting of short vertical lines between two parallel horizontal lines have been added to the writing.

35 BOWL

D 33, H 10 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.138

Beveled base. Around the wall, its base to the rim, a continuous inscription in brownish black, consisting of a repeated formula (unread). On the bottom, a tightly drawn curl that almost forms an oval. As on 32, added fine lines project vertically from the tops of the short letters.

36 BOWL FRAGMENT

D 22 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

A pseudo inscription at the rim in brownish black, repeated on the opposite wall, alternating with a small motif resembling a bud growing between two leaves. Added lines, more strongly drawn than on 32 and 35, project from the tops of the letters; the letters decrease in height after the fashion of those on 13. The presence of the projecting lines and the absence of glaze on the exterior of the bowl suggest that this was an import, probably from Gurgan. Probably not earlier than the end of the tenth century.

The motif between the inscriptions appears, better drawn, on another black on white bowl, reputedly from Nishapur (*Erickson Exhibition Catalogue*, p. 15, no. 11). Letters with strongly marked projections also occur in the polychrome on white ware of Nishapur (Group 4, 35), as well as in the related ware of Afrasiyab (Cohn-Wiener Photograph 1, page 364).

37 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 13.8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.571

Another fragment of this bowl is in the Teheran museum. On the wall, in brownish black, the word *yumn* (happiness) repeats to form a continuous band of decoration. At the rim, a black line, of which only traces remain. Other vessels on which *yumn* appears as a decorative band: 3, 79, 83.

38 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 6.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.561

The rim, shown at the bottom of the halftone, is undecorated. The decoration on the wall, an inscription with its base toward the rim, is in purplish black. As preserved it reads [sa]lamah (good health). The vertical letters have been given humps; scratched laterally with a short white line, these give the impression of tightly squeezed loops. Here there is only one hump on each vertical, but one sometimes sees a series, producing a wavy effect (Group 4, 9). For an intermediate version in Transoxianian ceramics, Pope, *Survey*, II, p. 1764, fig. 618. The use of these decorative humps in calligraphy goes back in textiles to the beginning of the tenth century, as exemplified in a piece of linen, dated 916/7 in the Metropolitan (Upton, *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, 3, p. 159, fig. 4). This decorative device was also employed during the early eleventh century in ornamental brickwork, for example, on the stonework at Amida (M. Berchem, *Amida*, Heidelberg, 1910, pl. v, no. 3, pl. VIII, nos. 3, 4) and on the tomb tower of Radkan, dated 1020/21 (Flury, *Syria*, V, pl. vi). Thus, the Nishapur bowl reflects a widespread and long-enduring calligraphic fashion.

39 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 15.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Spalled glaze. Rim decoration consists of half-moons rather than the usual sawtooth. On the wall, its base toward the rim, an inscription drawn with great delicacy and precision. The triangular tops of the letters are carefully divided. At the left is a well-drawn flourish, its details scratched through the black to the engobe. The rim decoration (compare 25) suggests an import.

40 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 10.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.681

A black line at the rim. Around the wall, a boldly painted inscription, its base toward the bottom of the bowl. A simplified, exaggerated version of the calligraphy on 24.

41 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 21.3 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Well turned, with carefully made foot ring. Decoration: a line with bristlelike strokes on one side and an ornamental addition at the rim. The line, which undoubtedly continued clear across the bowl, is here meant to be a

minute pseudo inscription, unlike its simpler meaning on such pieces as 2-4, 11, and others. The black, which is purplish, yellows the glaze in places, suggesting that the pigment contains iron in addition to manganese. Similar miniature "scripts," sometimes more elaborated, were also drawn on platters (50). They occur, too, in the polychrome on white ware (Group 4, 39, 40) and the ware with yellow-staining black (Group 8, 8, 32). For a reference to their occurrence in the black on white ware of Afrasiyab, see 50.

42 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 12.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.496

Another fragment of this bowl is in the Teheran museum. Decoration: a plain band at the rim and a band of inscription, painted in reserve, around the wall. Where thin, the black is brownish. The inscription, its base toward the bottom of the bowl, reads: *we sarur we sa'adet we s[alameh]* (and joy and happiness and health). For decorative bands of inscription on a bigger scale, see 5, 7. Small-scale inscriptions in reserve were not confined to Nishapur. They occur, in a more degenerate style, in the eleventh-century glazed wares of Lashkari Bazar (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, p. 61, fig. 46, pl. XIII, nos. 131, 133, 134).

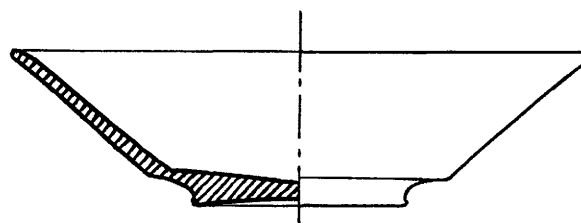
43 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 9.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.493

Unusually smooth clay with buff surface. The engobe extends only just over the rim, the glaze only a little farther. The black is purplish, the glaze greenish. The decoration consists of a simulated inscription in reserve with black bands above and below. Probably an import. Not earlier than the end of the tenth century.

44 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 11.6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.426



1:2

Part of a small, well-made vessel. On the wall, base toward the rim, is the word *yumn* (happiness), placed on a double line ending in a curl.

45 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 14 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 40.170.563

Well made, the base having a cleanly cut foot ring of a type more often found on black and red on white bowls (Group 4, 4, drawing). On the wall, in purplish black, an inscription consisting of the words *al yumn* (happiness), fully and correctly written and repeated at least once, with a line added above and below. Although the lettering is treated as a band of ornament, its base—untypically—is toward the rim. The band probably repeated on the opposite wall. Not earlier than the end of the tenth century.

On Afrasiyab bowls, comparable inscriptions painted without the added lines occur four times (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. II, right). Similar bowls, of the eleventh century, have been found in quantity at Lashkari Bazar (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, pl. XIV, B₁₂, B₂₃).

46 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

D 14 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

An inscription, probably reading *kull hani'an mari'an* (may everything be good). Also present, the triple marks of a stilt. Another combination of words on the base of a bowl of this ware, seen in the accompanying drawing, was found at a high level in Tepe Madraseh and can be read as *barakeh we qadr* (blessing and power):



47 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 8.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.566

The black is purplish. The glaze, slightly green, extends about halfway down the exterior. A heavy black line at the rim. Although the drawing is tighter, the treatment of the script is reminiscent of 36, with thin strokes extending from the ends of the verticals. Such pieces were rare among the finds, suggesting importation. Their poor quality would indicate that their introduction was fortuitous and not by way of trade.

48 BOWL FRAGMENT (detail)

W 4.95 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

A simulated, debased inscription.

49 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 21 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

A poorly drawn pseudo inscription in brownish black crosses the bottom. The protrusions on the sides of the letters are in the manner of 38, but without the refinement of the scratched white lines. An unusual addition to the decoration is a rosettelike motif of three large and three small "petals." Late tenth or early eleventh century.

50 PLATTER FRAGMENT

W 20.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan (surface find)
Discarded

Similar in shape to 17, except that both the inside and outside of the foot ring are vertical, whereas the inside of 17's slants. Decoration, a line of miniature "script" (compare 41), presumably extending from rim to rim. Similar scripts occur in the black on white ware of Afrasiyab (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. I). On another fragmentary Nishapur platter, similar in shape to 50, the line of miniature writing consisted of a repetition of this formula:



51 BOWL FRAGMENT

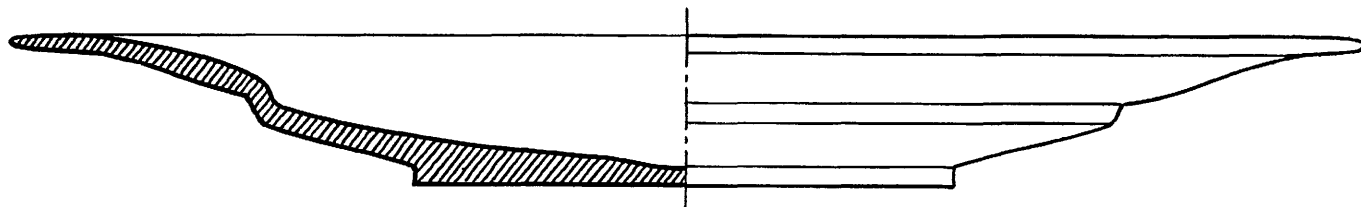
W 20.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Purplish black, the inscription is in formal, elegant Kufic, the horizontals and verticals of equal width, the tops of the letters angular and pointed. These are features of the ninth and tenth centuries. Since 1940 several platters and bowls with this type of script, almost certainly from Nishapur, have come to light (*Erickson Exhibition Catalogue*, p. 25, no. 10; Wilkinson, *Iranian Ceramics*, pl. 22; *Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, fig. 8). For a bowl with similar script, reputedly from Afrasiyab, see Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 14B. Other Afrasiyab examples with this script are in the sherd collection in Berlin; for one example, see Erdmann, *Bulletin of the Iranian Institute*, VI, p. 107, fig. 8. For related but poorer versions, see Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. IV. Whether this type of bowl was manufactured in Afrasiyab only or in both Afrasiyab and Nishapur is not yet certain.

52 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 13.3 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

A carefully drawn inscription in knotted and humped Kufic. The details of the knotting are scratched through the pigment, which is purplish black, with delicate white lines showing in the body of the *kaf* at the rim and in the curved stroke that begins as a thin line and thickens after



53 1:2

a double hump. This calligraphy is a development of that seen on 38. Place of manufacture of such bowls as 52 is still to be established.

53 PLATTER FRAGMENT

D 36 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MMA 40.170.576

Another portion of this platter is in the Teheran museum. Flat base, no foot ring. On the broad, flat rim, a well-drawn inscription, the black pigment staining the nearby glaze purple. The uprights of the letters are ornamented with double loops resembling those of 52 but drawn more openly so that they give the impression of wavy lines. Between two of the letters, a four-petaled rosette similar to those on 31. Details have been scratched through the pigment with a point. On the bottom, another four-petaled rosette. For a complete plate with apparently identical decoration, presumably found in Nishapur since 1940, Beach, *Bulletin of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts*, LXIII, p. 108, fig. 7. An even more elaborate treatment of this script occurs on a late tenth-century platter from Transoxiana (Pope, *Survey*, II, p. 1764, fig. 618). The location of the Nishapur examples with this type of script confirms the dating to the late tenth century. Its use continued in the eleventh century in Nishapur and then died out there, though it continued elsewhere. The central rosette of 53 is paralleled in the black on white ware of Afrasiyab (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. vi), but resemblance in such a small detail is not necessarily evidence that 53 was not made in Nishapur.

54 BOWL FRAGMENT

H (as shown) 27 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MMA 40.170.562

A portion of this fragment is in the Teheran museum. Base has a foot ring. Engobe pure white. Glaze, otherwise colorless, is tinged purple near the inscription with a hint of brown here and there; this suggests that iron was mixed with the manganese to produce the black (compare 41). Decoration: a band of foliated Kufic that probably crossed the bowl from rim to rim. The inscription is beautifully drawn. The parallel horizontal lines are made to appear interwoven by means of fine lines scratched through to the white; they are further decorated by small semicircular humps. These humps, unlike similar adornments on 52

and 53, are not exaggerated. The tops of the letters end either in triangles or trilobed foliate forms. Place of manufacture uncertain: perhaps Nishapur, perhaps Transoxiana. For a similar but less well executed script on a polychrome on white platter, reputedly and almost certainly found in Nishapur, see *Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, fig. 9. A decadent version of this type of script occurs on a black on white ware dish from Afrasiyab (Cohn-Wiener, *Asia*, February, 1941, p. 107, fig. 7).

55 DISH (minor restoration)

D 15.9, H 4.9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

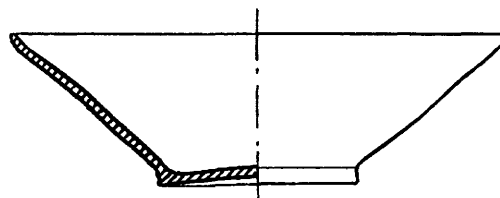
MMA 40.170.4

Base, slightly concave, is partly covered with engobe. Decoration: four bands of simulated, purely decorative script in brownish black, one on the bottom, three placed radially (compare 23).

56 DISH

D 13.2, H 3.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MMA 38.40.165



1:2

Base slightly concave. Glaze has yellow green tinge. The decoration around the wall once consisted of three loosely drawn "labels" with underlines (compare 1). On the bottom is a small curl. This is found on many black and white vessels both in Nishapur and Afrasiyab and is probably no more meaningful than the circular spot that is also frequently seen in the center.

57 DISH

D 14.3, H 4 cm ; Qanat Tepe

MMA 39.40.55

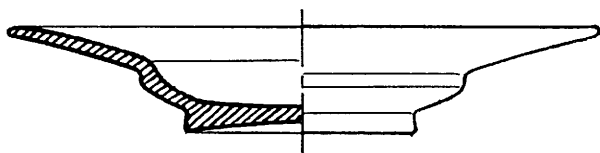
Base slightly concave, without engobe. Exterior covered with engobe but glazed only at the rim. Inside, around the wall, four lengths of pseudo writing; on the bottom, a circular spot. The writing is composed of a single letter

like a reversed S, repeated. For a less debased version in the polychrome on white ware of Nishapur, and for a comment on its probable origin, see Group 4, 3. The style of the decoration and the location of the dish in a late-period well indicate manufacture in the late tenth or early eleventh century.

A simulated inscription composed of reversed S-forms was incorporated into textile designs by the first half of the eleventh century (Kühnel, *Islamische Stoffe*, pl. v). Such resemblances are not accidental; rather, they are instances of decorative motifs that quickly became fashionable in several media.

58 DISH

D 15.4, H 3.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.162



1:2

Dishes of this shallow shape, while not uncommon in this ware, are less common than those in which the transition of planes is sharper. The whole of the underside is covered with engobe and glaze. Decoration: four small triangles spaced around the black-lined rim (compare 3, 23) and an unusual, loosely drawn, purely decorative motif on the bottom.

59 DISH

D 12, H 3.2 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Decoration in brownish black: four radial bands filled with blocks of pseudo writing, including a *kaf*-like letter, triangular blobs in the spaces at the rim, and a circular spot on the bottom. Found with 57. Late tenth or early eleventh century. A similar but less disintegrated treatment of script occurs on a bowl with white slip painting on a black engobe (Group 5, 3). A similar type also appears in the eleventh-century ware of Lashkari Bazar (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, pl. XIII, no. 160) and again, with the *kaf*-like letter between verticals, at Afrasiyab, in ware generally reckoned to be of the Karakhanid period (922–1211) (Cohn-Wiener, *Asia*, February, 1941, p. 107, fig. 7).

60 DISH

D 10.3, H 3.2 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.54

Decoration in brownish black. On the bottom, an ornamental device without meaning. At the black-lined rim,

a triangular blob. Originally there were probably three such triangles. Found with 57. Late tenth or early eleventh century.

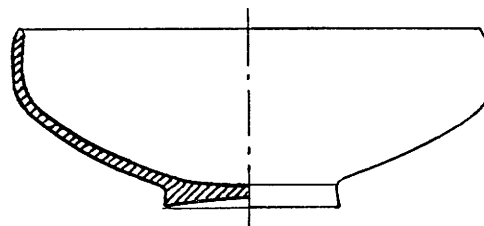
61 DISH

D 14.5, H 4.1 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Decoration in purplish black. On the bottom, a pseudo inscription in unique style. At rim, a sawtooth. Supplementing this is a line with bristlelike strokes on the lower side.

62 DISH

D 10.8, H 5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 36.20.5

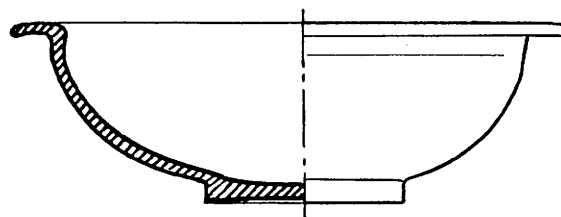


1:2

Of uncommon shape, with incurving rim. Base, concave, is covered with engobe but is unglazed. Decoration in semitransparent yellowish brown: pseudo writing on a large scale, freely and gracefully drawn. No decoration on the exterior. A similar vessel was found, its decoration on a smaller scale, with some green glaze dropped upon its base, an indication that black on white ware was at least occasionally fired together with other types of glazed earthenware.

63 DISH

D 14.5, H 4.6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.111



1:2

Wide rim. Base, slightly concave, covered with engobe. Decoration: an inscription and two birds on the bottom, four triangles spaced around the rim. The inscription derives from the word *barakeh* (blessing). The definite article *al* appears at the beginning (at right) but is omitted in the repetitions. The finials of some of the letters are closely related to those of 14 and 15, suggesting produc-

tion in the same pottery. The two dots added to the birds' upper wings should really appear upon their backs—see 66 for a better version and further explanation. Several vessels of this shape and with almost identical decoration were found; one is in the Teheran museum. The discovery of a waster decorated with a similar bird (89) indicates that such pieces were manufactured locally.

64 DISH

D 15.4, H 5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.98

Base, slightly concave, is covered with engobe. Decoration in brownish black; a loosely drawn cranelike bird on the bottom, four triangles spaced around the black-lined rim. End of the tenth or early eleventh century. Several similar dishes were found. One found in Nishapur before the start of the Museum's excavations and published as of the twelfth century (Pope, *Survey*, II, p. 1503, fig. 530) should be redated in light of these subsequent finds.

65 DISH

D 12.5, H 3.7 cm ; Tepe Madrasch
MMA 40.170.38

In reserve, five circles around the wall and a sixth on the bottom, each containing a birdlike device; in the spaces between the circles, small, generally triangular shapes, also in reserve, each containing a dot. Found at a high level; late tenth or early eleventh century. A fragment of a similar bowl (discarded) had a group of three dots in place of the birdlike figure. Also found were fragments of a small pitcher, showing on the sloping shoulder a ring of circles with a typical Nishapur bird in each.

66 DISH

D 13, H 4.3 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

A bird on the bottom, three triangles spaced around the rim. The bird is a duck: the two spots on its back (compare 63) indicate the curling feathers that are so common in Sasanian representations of ducks. In the Sasanian versions the feathers are usually more carefully drawn, whether on small sealstones, silver plates, or rock sculptures. For an example of the last, Sarre, *Die Kunst des Alten Persien*, pl. 97.

67 DISH (some restoration)

D 12.2, H 4.3 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.164

An uncommon shape (compare 62), with incurving rim. Base flat, covered with engobe but not with glaze. No decoration on exterior. The black is purplish, the glaze

greenish. The crude drawing, none of which has been altered in the restoration, would seem to show a man astride a horned animal. Although no similar piece was found, animate representations other than birds were employed (see page 92).

68 BOWL FRAGMENT (detail)

Qanat Tepe
MIB

The central decoration of a large bowl that had, around its rim, some short bands of poorly drawn Kufic in reserve. Probably intended as a stork or a crane, the bird, artistically speaking, is related to those of 13–15 and 64. The two strokes added on its leaflike wings, anatomically meaningless, are a mannerism common in the black on white ware birds of Nishapur. The enclosure of the head by two curved lines is unusual. Late tenth or early eleventh century.

69 BOWL FRAGMENT (detail)

Tepe Madrasch
MIB

A simply drawn, naturalistic bird. The bowl from which this central figure was taken resembled 15 in its band of inscription and rim. A similar bird occurs as the central motif on an Egyptian bowl dated to the eleventh century (Bahgat & Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, pl. XI, no. 8).

70 DISH FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 8.2 cm ; reputedly in vicinity of Omar Khayyam
(surface find)
MMA 36.20.38

Because there is no trace of glaze, it cannot be said for sure that this is black on white ware; it may have been a dish decorated with yellow-staining black. The decoration around the wall is a late and poor form of pseudo writing derived from the word *barakeh* (blessing). On the bottom is a bird with a fishlike tail; no other bird like this was found. Also unique is the object in the bird's beak; instead of the leaf that is commonly seen, the object gives the impression of being a pear-shaped bundle. Probably late tenth or early eleventh century. For an even more degenerate form of the "inscription," see 73.

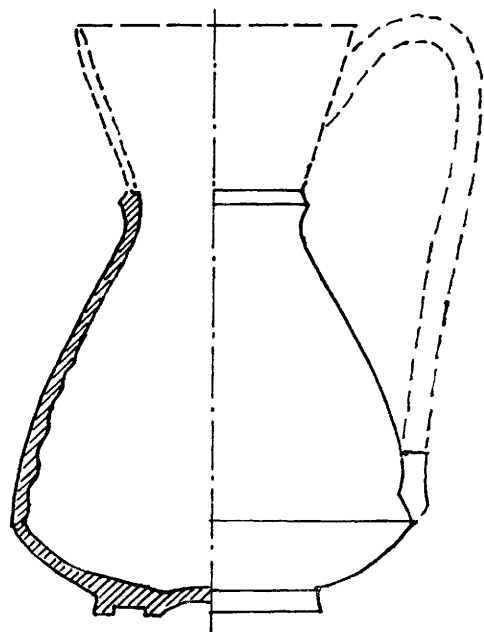
71 JAR

H 12.8, D 12 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Poorly potted. Around the shoulder, in brownish black, a series of loosely drawn birds reminiscent of the one on 66. Beneath, a repetitive, illegible inscription. An Afra-siyab jar with an encircling inscription, written in a better hand but without birds, appears in Stoliarov Photograph 1, row B, no. 2, page 366.

72 PITCHER (handle missing)

H 15, D 10.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB



1:2

Well turned, the shape also occurs in the ninth-century unglazed ware of Nishapur. Decoration: a boldly written inscription in brownish black, in style reminiscent of 27. An incomplete and badly damaged ewer or jar of this ware, but of a shape also often found unglazed, likewise came from Tepe Madraseh. Its decoration, recalling Arabic script, encircled the vessel at the shoulder. Like 72, probably late tenth or early eleventh century:



1:2

73 BOWL

D 10, H 6.7 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Base, concave, has neither engobe nor glaze. Interior undecorated. On the exterior, painted in a band around the rim, is a repeated formula, one of the ultimate degenerations of the word *barakeh* (blessing). The black is purplish in some places, brownish in others. Bowls of this shape, with high insloping sides, and with this decoration, were common. In some examples with low incurving sides (after the fashion of 62), the simulated calligraphy is placed across the interior of the bowl from rim to rim and a minor motif added at either side; a bowl so decorated is in the Metropolitan (38.40.158). When the

decoration is on the interior, it was apparently the custom to draw a circumscribing black line near the rim.

The shape and decoration of 73 are common in the ware with yellow-staining black, with the decoration often on a larger scale. (Group 8, 2, 4, 5.)

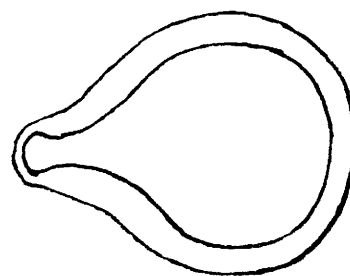
74 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 10 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.564

A portion of this fragment is in the Teheran museum. Originally almost hemispherical. A brilliant piece, the engobe pure white, the glaze colorless except near the black, where it is purpled. Decoration, confined to the exterior, consists of a sawtooth at the rim and a band of curling stems and trefoils, the broad lines of which are made to appear interwoven by means of fine white lines scratched through the pigment. On the evidence of its technical and decorative qualities, possibly from the same pottery as 18.

75 LAMP

L 9, H 3.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.290



1:2

Engobe and glaze applied both outside and inside. Decoration: a sawtooth around the rim. Blackening of the tip of the spout indicates that the lamp was used.

76 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 12 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

In brownish black, a lozenge divided into four smaller ones, each containing a loosely drawn foliate form, the motif as a whole probably deriving from the design on 77.

77 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 14 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MIB

A carefully drawn rosette composed of four palmettes point to point within a circle. The palmettes, formed by two addorsed half-palmettes, are enclosed in stems that form heart shapes. Antedating the Islamic era, this motif remained a favorite in various media for centuries. It is to be seen in the stucco ornament of the Parthian palace at Assur (W. Andrae & H. Lenzen, *Die Partherstadt Assur*, Leipzig, 1933, pl. 20a, 21d), and it occurs as a textile decoration in the Sasanian rock carvings at Taq-i-Bustan (Herzfeld, *Iran in the Ancient East*, p. 339, fig. 421, right). The individual palmettes in their heart-shaped enclosures occur on the capital of a column at Taq-i-Bustan (Sarre, *Die Kunst des Alten Persien*, pl. 92). The complete motif is to be seen in a Mesopotamian textile of the tenth or eleventh century ("Notes," *Ars Islamica*, IX, 1942, fig. 14). In ceramics of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the motif was used in places as far apart as Lashkari Bazar in the east (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, pl. xviii, no. 278) and Corinth in the west (C. H. Morgan II, *The Byzantine Pottery*, Cambridge, Mass., 1942, pl. LIII, o).

78 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 9 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MMA 40.170.572

Although the rim itself is missing, enough remains to show that it curved inward. Decoration: a band containing a wavy line with foliate additions. Such a treatment was rare in this ware, unlike the bands of wave and dot motif seen on 4 and 12. The exterior of 78, covered with engobe and glaze, was apparently decorated with a group, or groups, of vertical strokes contained within an oval. Fragments of bowls were found with more elaborate bands than that of 78, half-palmettes appearing in place of the leaves.

79 BOWL FRAGMENT (rim)

W 9 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MMA 40.170.573

The black, where thin, is purplish. The design is based on the word *yumn* (happiness), here treated entirely as a decoration. For its evolution, see 37, 83, and 3, in that order.

80 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

D 8 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MIB

In brownish black: a loosely drawn half-palmette flanked by two thin stems with leafy ornament, in reserve. Bowls with bottoms decorated in reserve were not common in

Nishapur, and bowls with both bottom and rim so decorated (see 5) were exceptional. Patterns somewhat similar to that of 80 are to be seen on a bowl of the tenth or eleventh century found at Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 234, fig. 9, right).

81 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 15 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan

MMA 40.170.569

A pair of half-palmettes joined by an S-curve. Pairs of projecting strokes have been added to the stem and to the half-palmettes. Compare 68 for similar additions to the wings of a bird.

82 BOWL FRAGMENT (rim)

W 8 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MIB

A sawtooth and a band containing a leafy scroll in reserve, the scroll treated more gracefully than the more commonly seen (as on 8) repetition of a single leaf.

83 BOWL FRAGMENT (rim)

W 6.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MMA 40.170.571

The word *yumn* (happiness) repeated to form a pattern. The spaces between the vertical letters are filled with notched triangles. For a simpler version of this band, 37; for more purely decorative versions, 3 and 79.

84 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 9.2 cm ; Qanat Tepe

MIB

In brownish black: a freely drawn, disintegrated half-palmette enclosed in concentric lozenges. Early eleventh century.

85 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 20.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MMA 40.170.466

Discolored by seepage under the glaze. A length of sawtooth, a line dotted on the lower side, a repeated motif consisting of four amalgamated spots, and a second line with dots. The unit, comprising a panel, was probably repeated on the opposite wall. In this instance the dotted line is undoubtedly merely decorative (as on 11 and 61, among others) and not intended as a pseudo inscription (as it is on 41).

86 FRAGMENT

W 13 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.574

Transparent brown pigment, greenish glaze. A length of sawtooth and a subjoined band filled with wave pattern. The unit was probably repeated at least once. For versions of the wave pattern with a dot, see 4, 12. In Afrasiyab the pattern, occurring without the dot, is drawn with a heavier line (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. XII, bottom; Stoliarov Photograph 2, row B, no. 1, page 366).

87 FRAGMENT

W 14.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

A black line at the rim, and a circumscribing band in which a lozenge divided into four smaller ones alternates with a biconvex form. The only example found with this decoration.

88 WASTER (bottom)

W 9 cm ; East Kilns
MIB

An inscription. The style, with the roughly drawn top of a *kaf* suggesting a foliation, is uncommon in Nishapur but occurs in wares of Afrasiyab (Stoliarov Photograph 3, row A, no. 4, page 367). These wares have been assigned

by Ernst Cohn-Wiener (*Asia*, February, 1941, p. 103) to the eleventh century, and by Arthur Upham Pope (*Survey*, II, p. 1477, fig. 526 B) to the tenth. 88 was found near the kilns that produced the alkaline-glazed ware; its discovery proves that uncommonness in the pottery of Nishapur is not necessarily a sign of importation. Location suggests that 88 was made in the eleventh century.

89 a,b WASTER

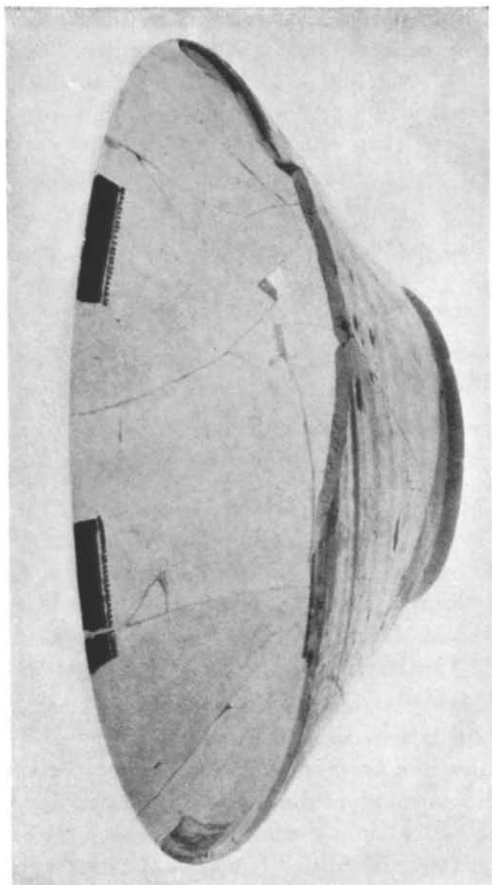
H 17.8 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 48.101.29

Typical reddish clay. In shape like 90. Base (89a) covered with engobe in usual manner; bottom (89b) decorated with a duck (compare 90).

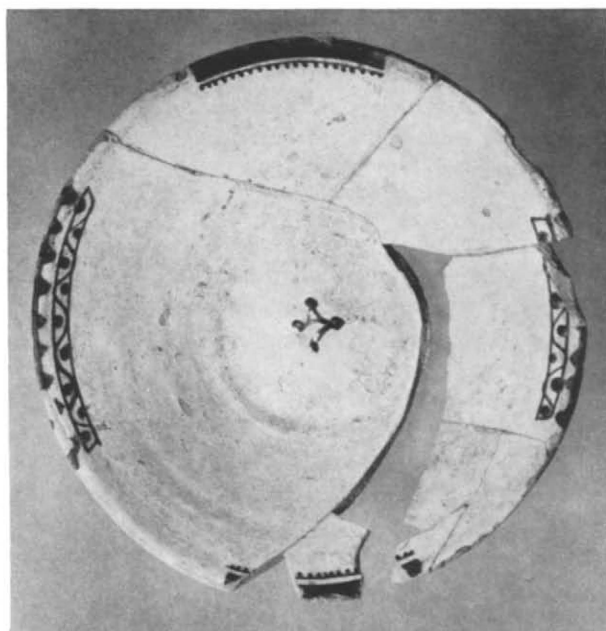
90 BOWL

D 34.6, H 10.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.113

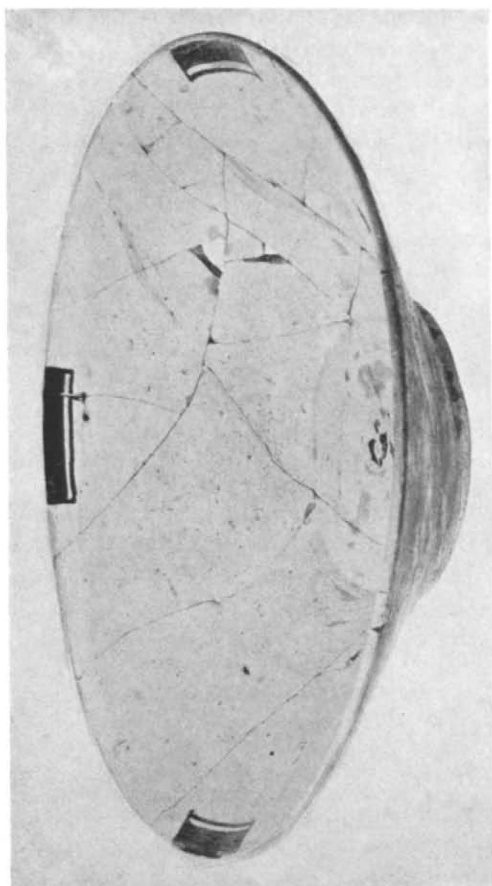
Reddish clay. Base, which has a groove, is covered with engobe but is unglazed. Exterior undecorated. Though of large size, the bowl is decorated in only the simplest way, with a sawtooth at the rim and a duck in the center. The duck's back lacks the added spots seen on 66. The pigment is brownish black. The glaze is slightly greenish where thick; it is thin in places near the rim. Fired inverted.



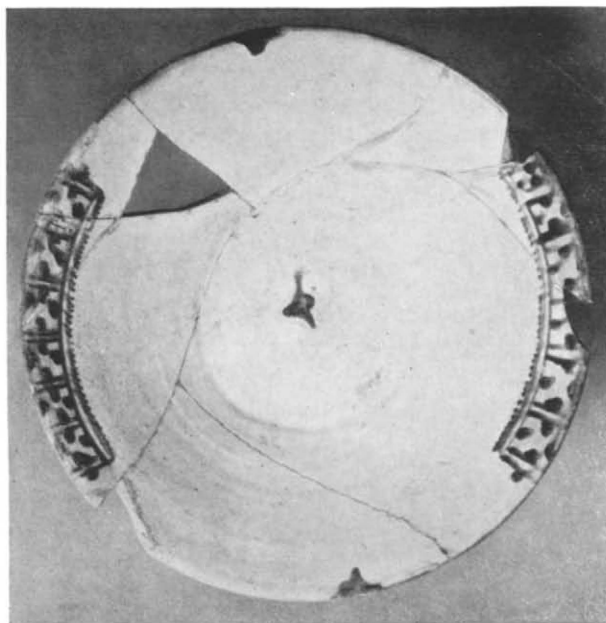
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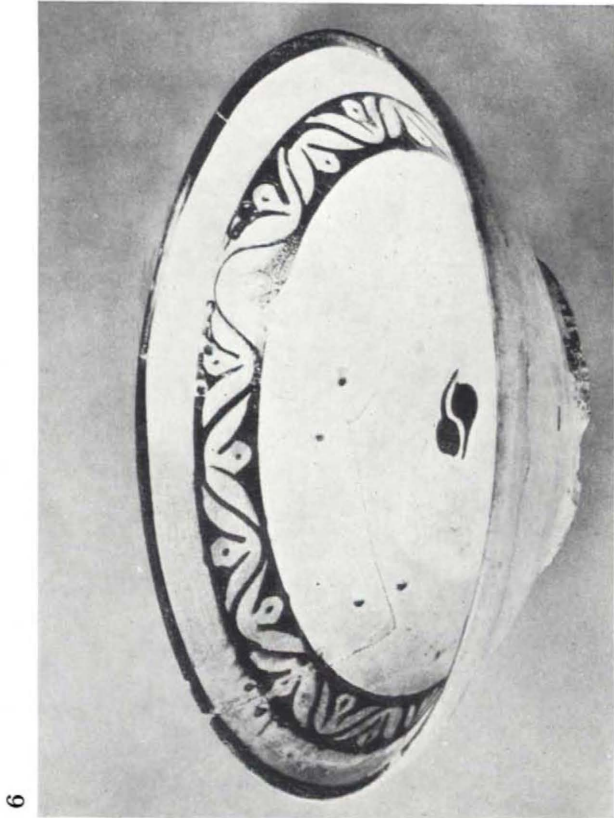
4



1



3



6



8

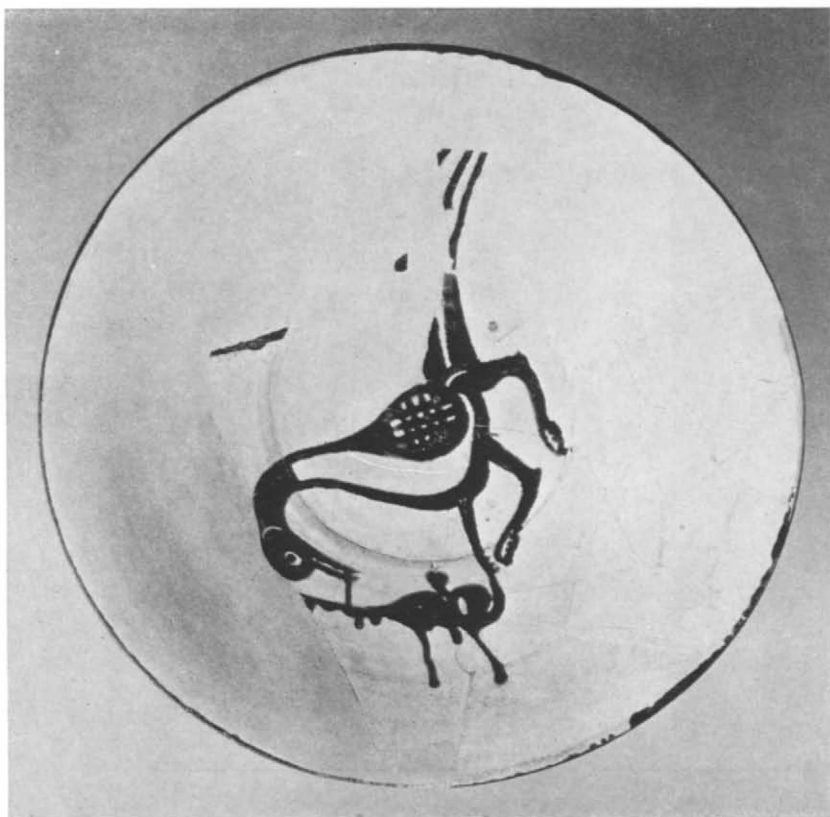


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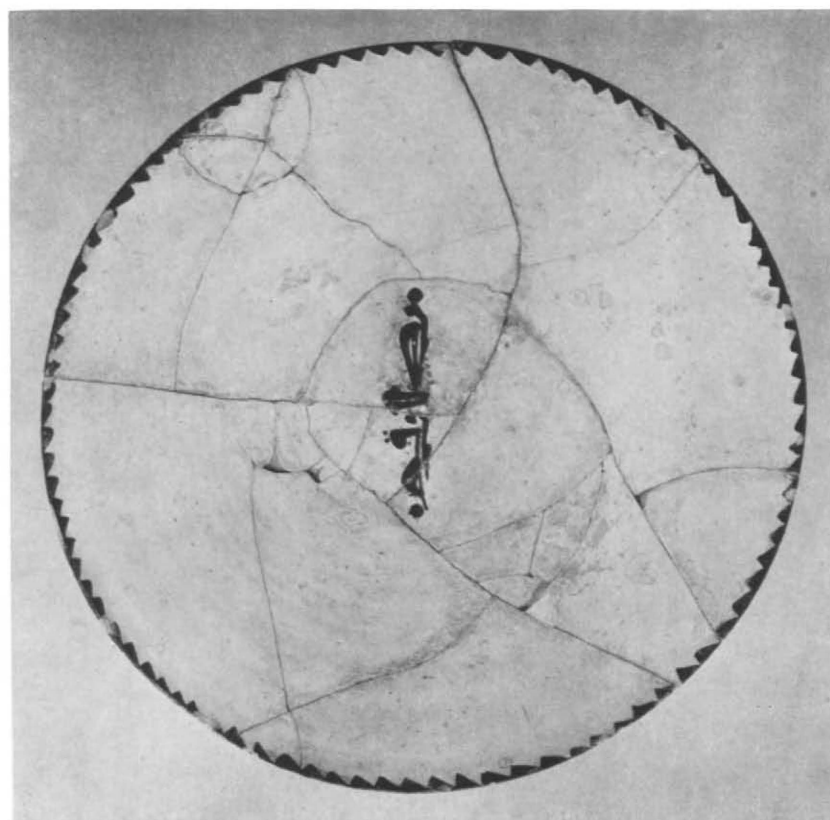


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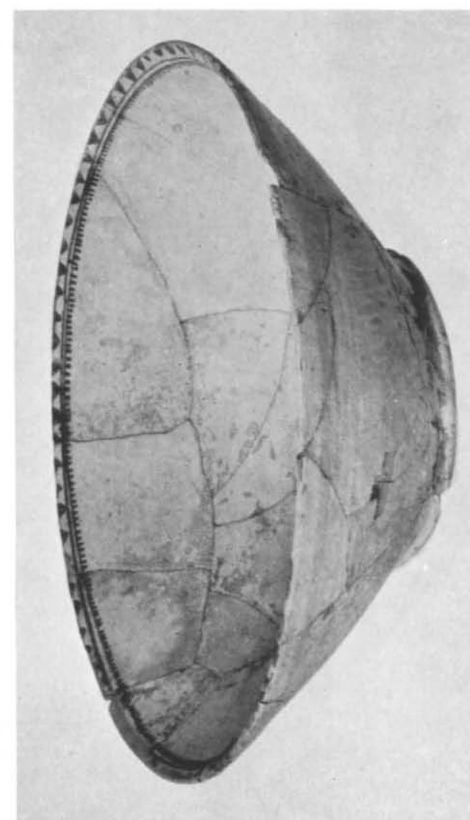
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12

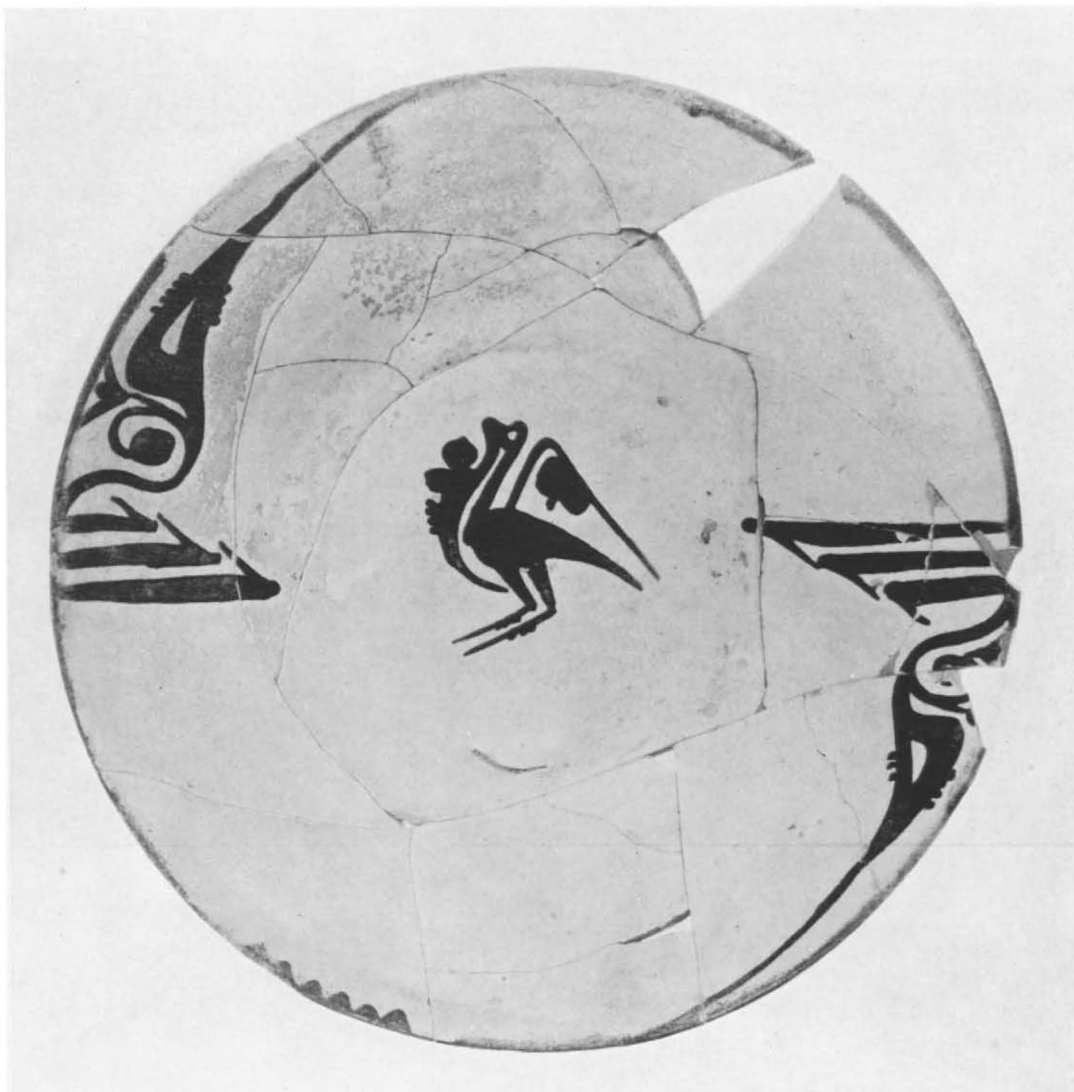


9



11

13



14



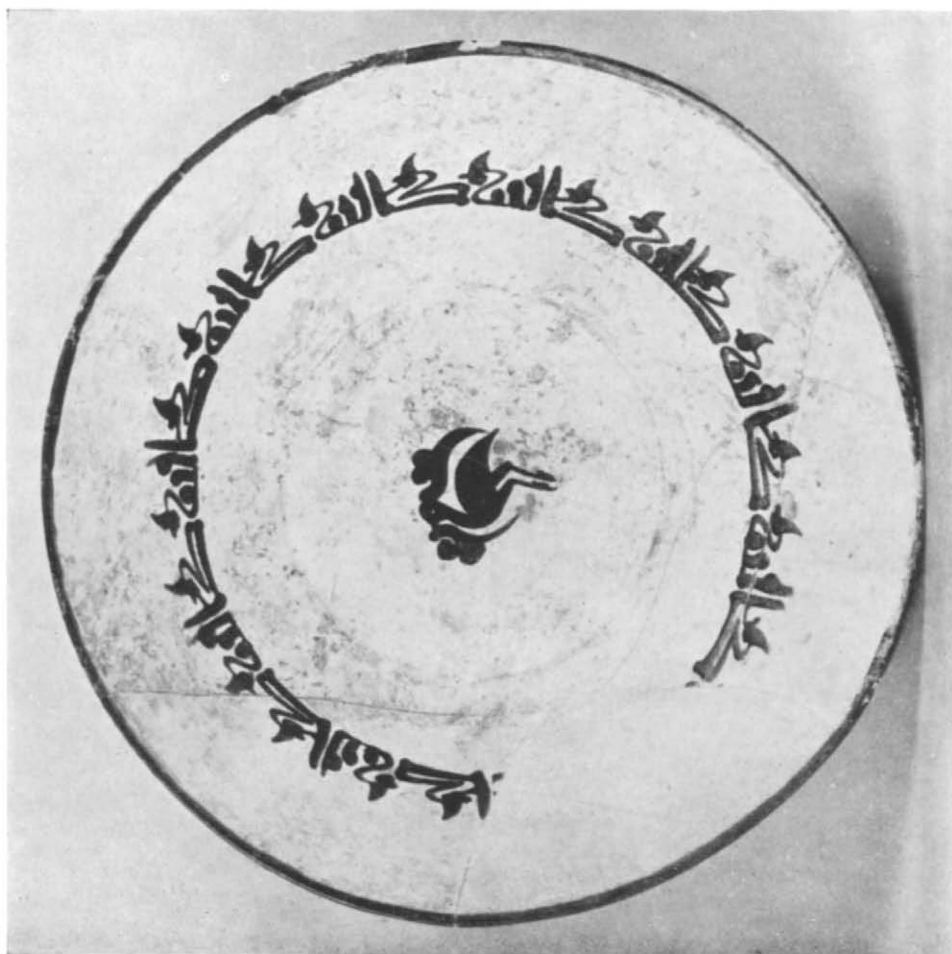
16a



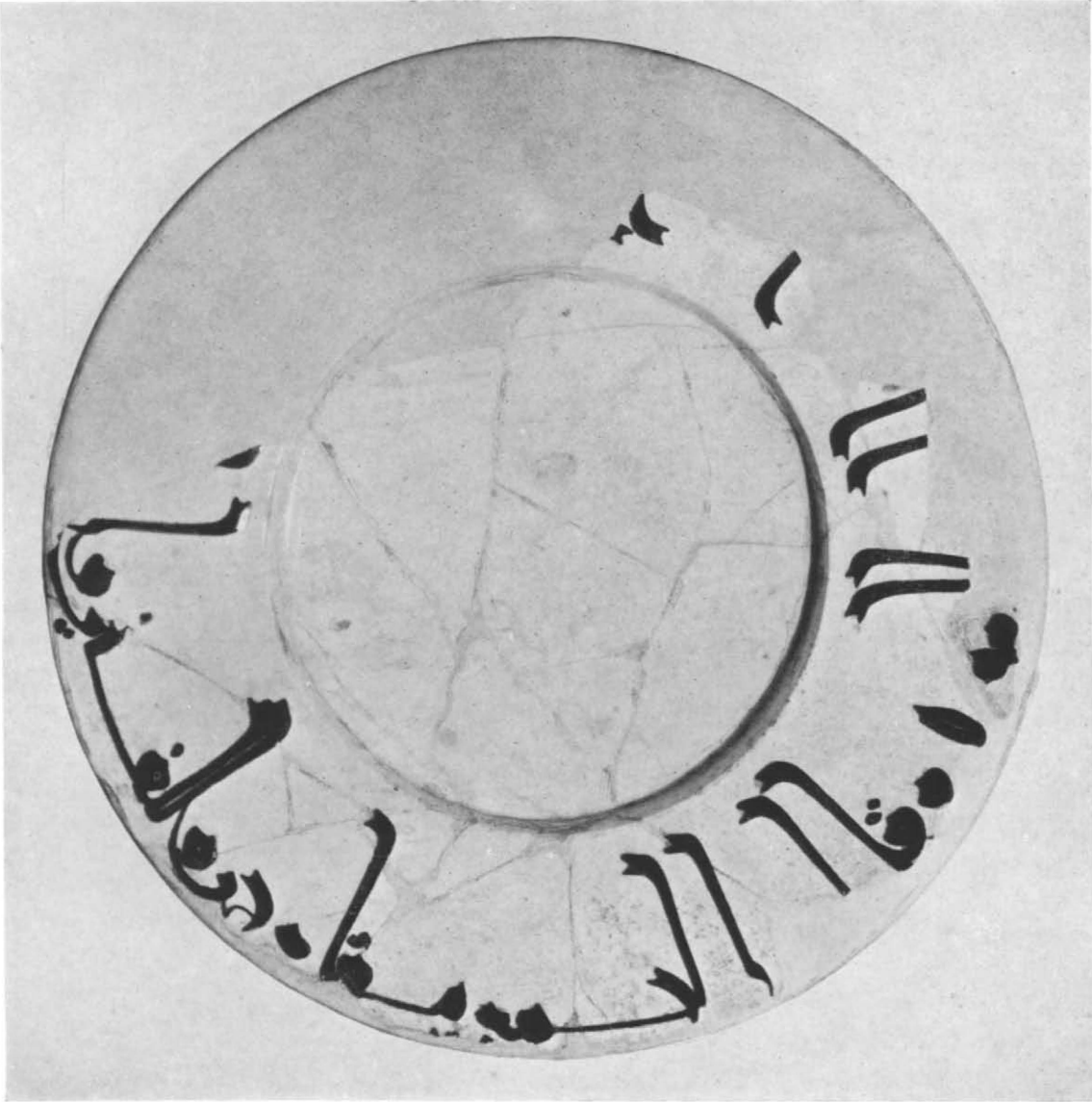
16b



15



17



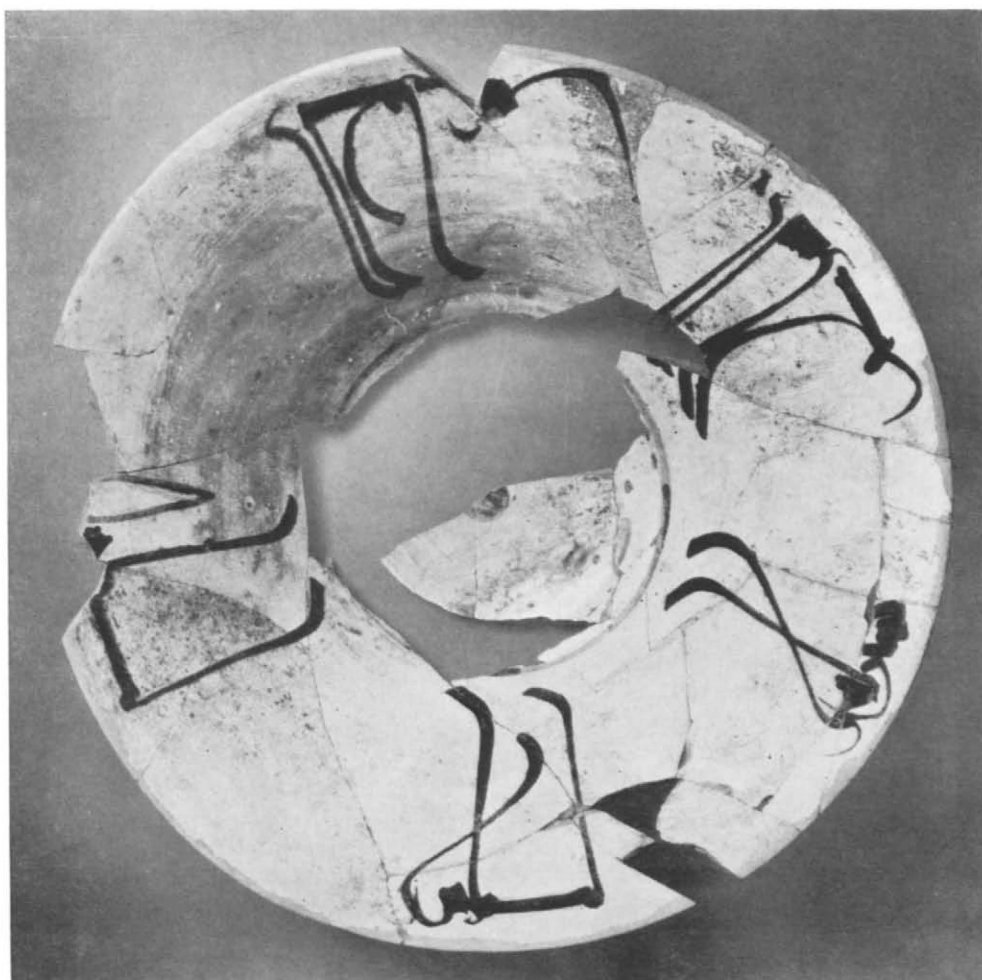
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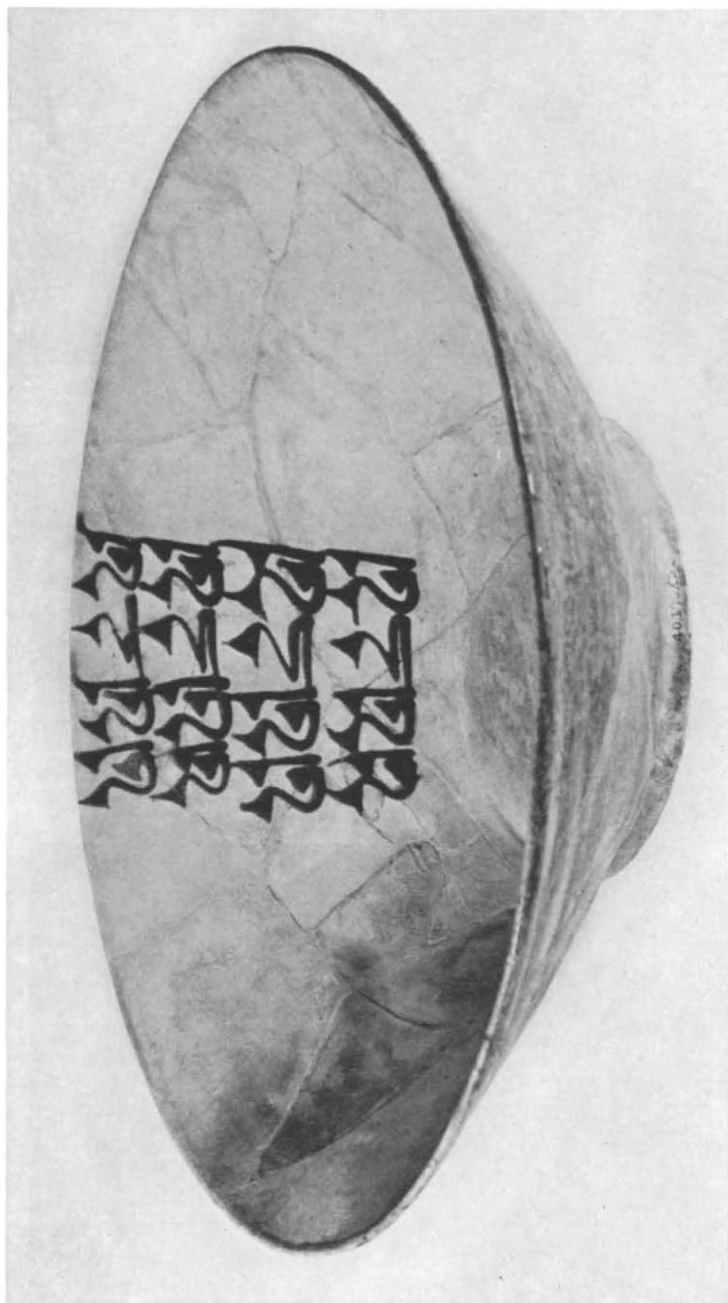


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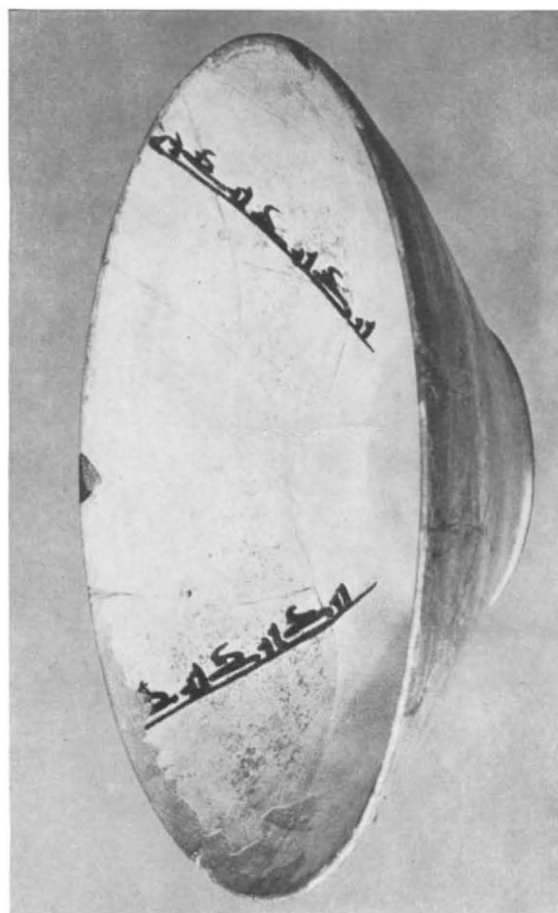


20





21

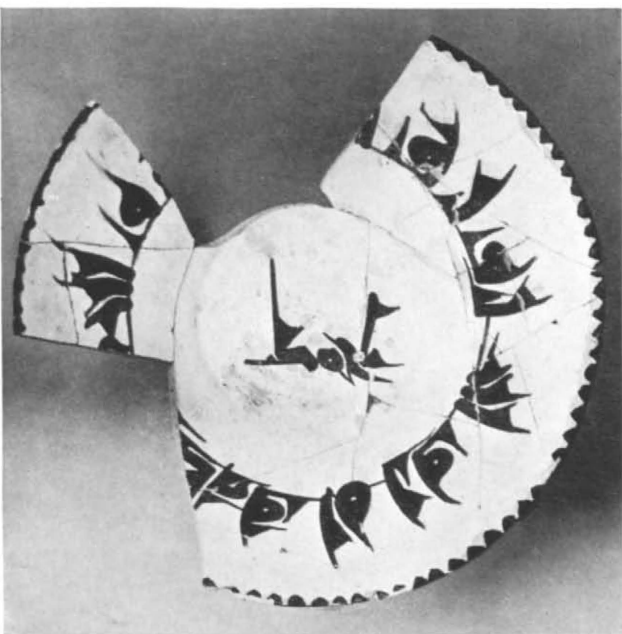


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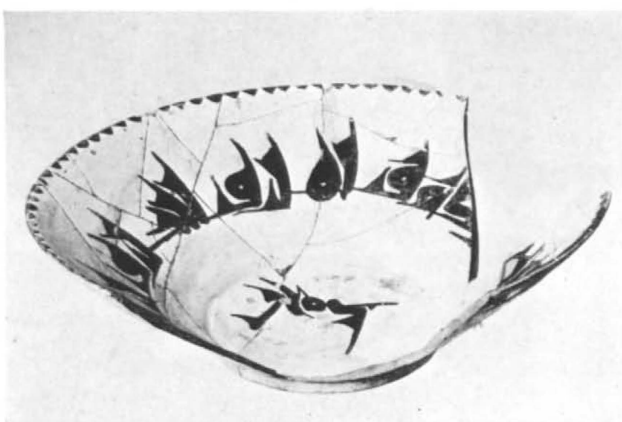
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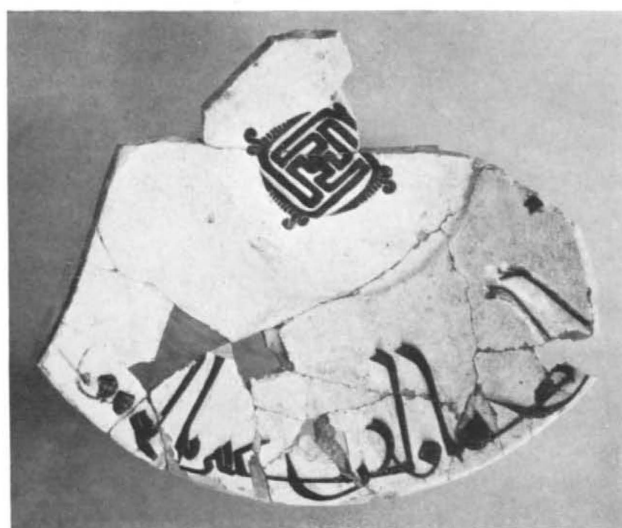
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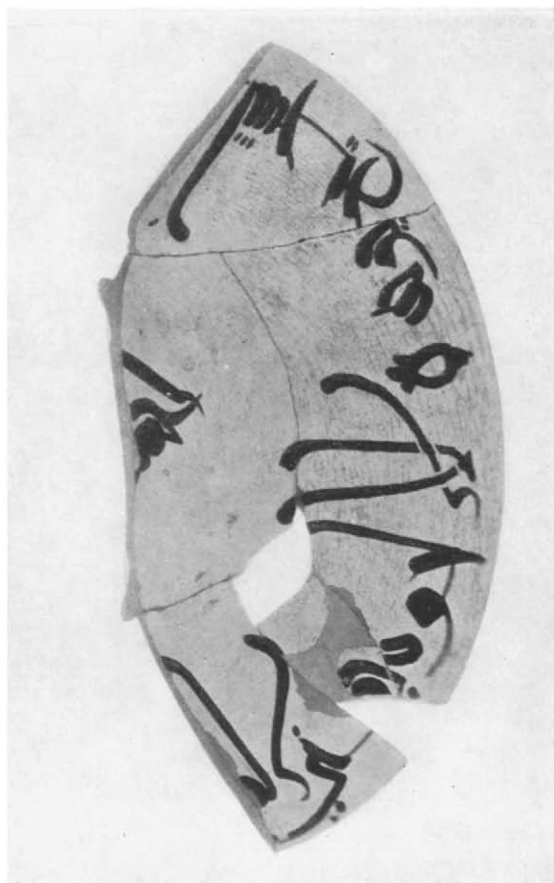
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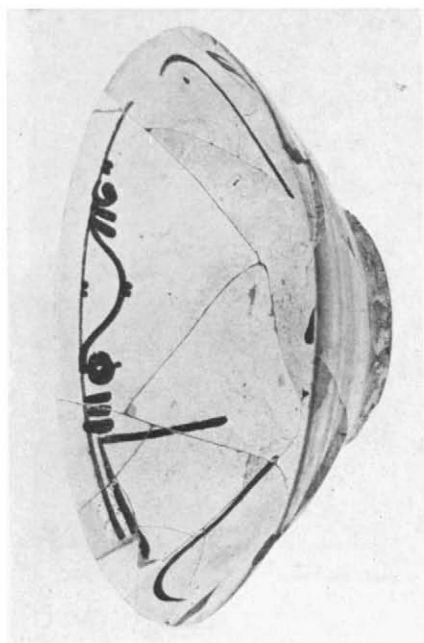
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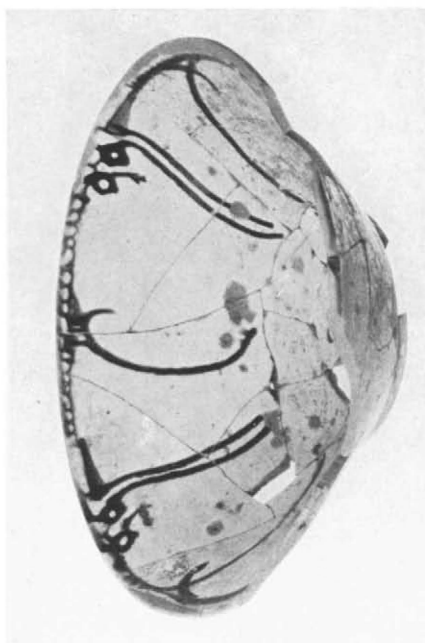


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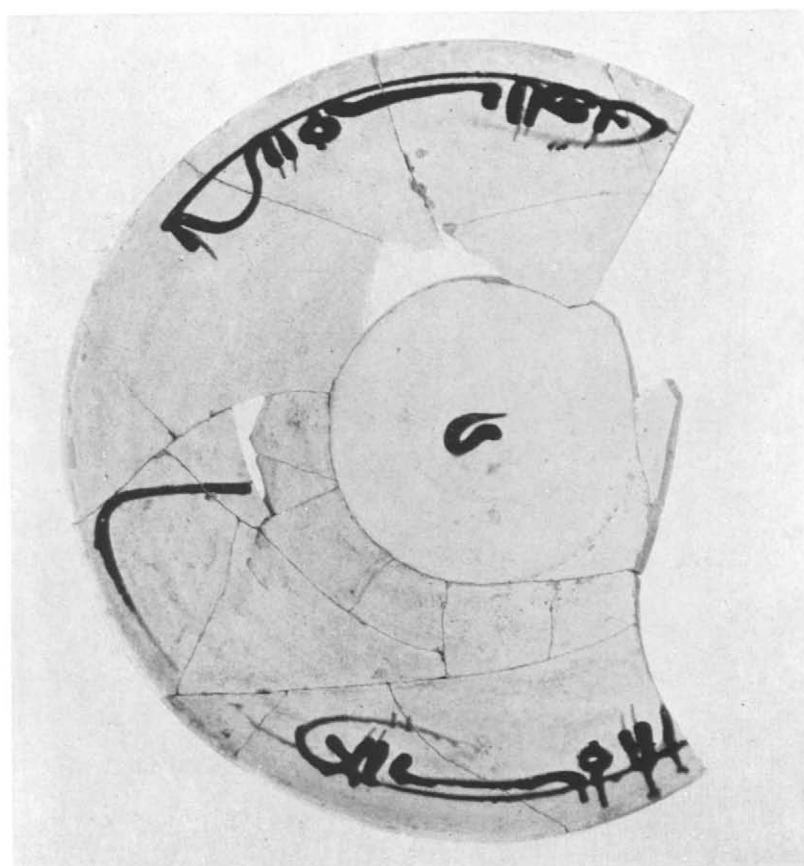
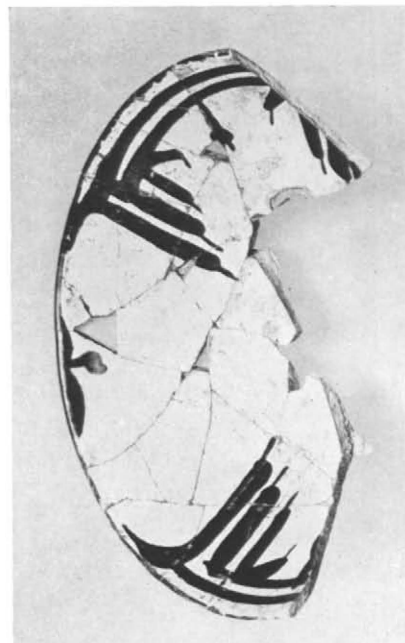
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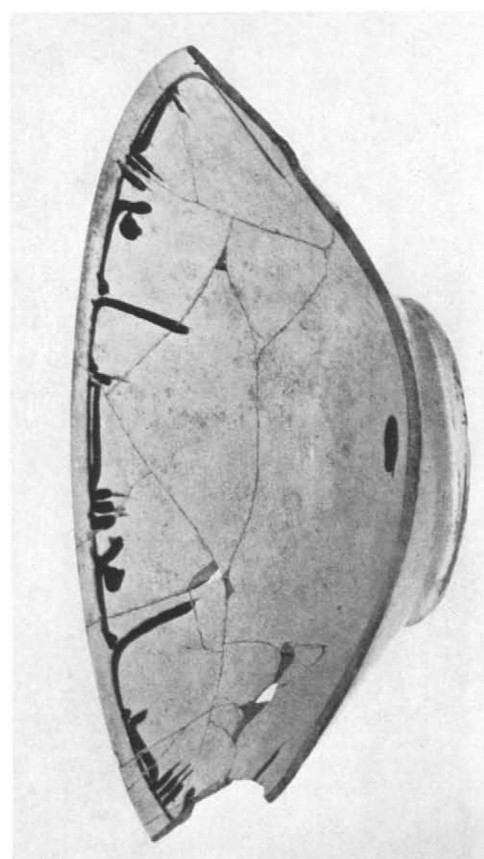
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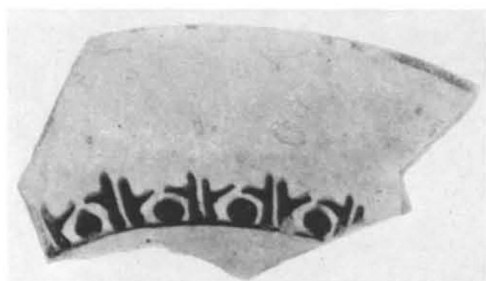
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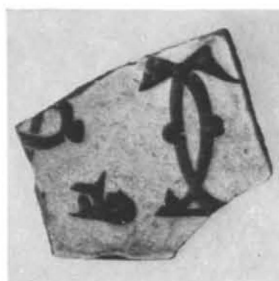
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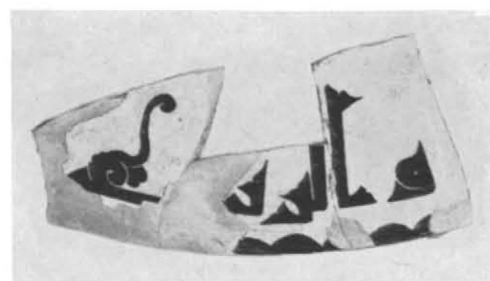
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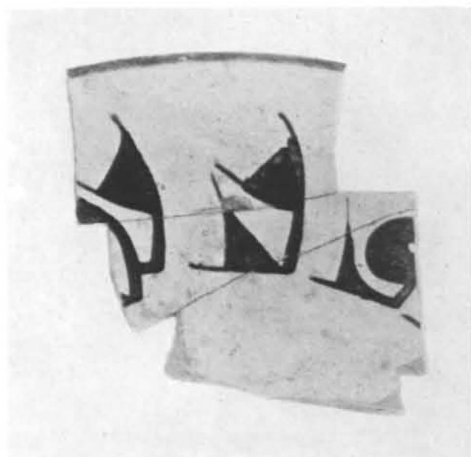
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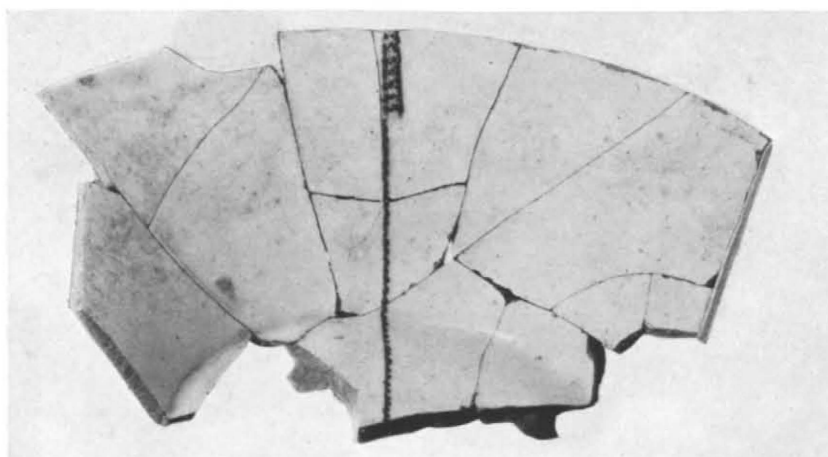
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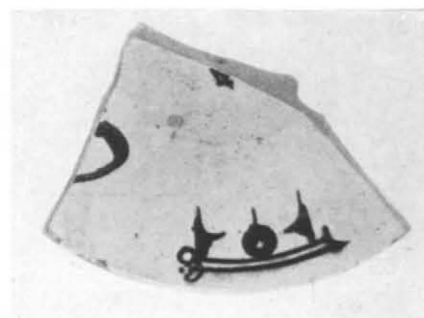
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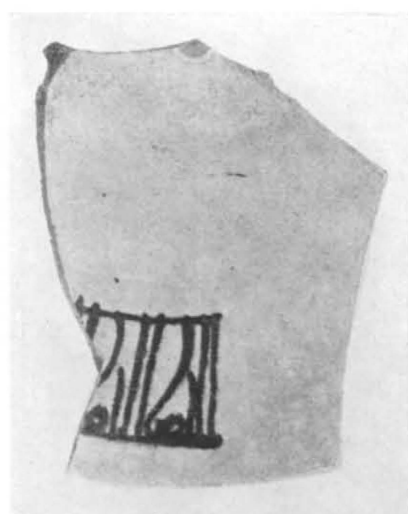
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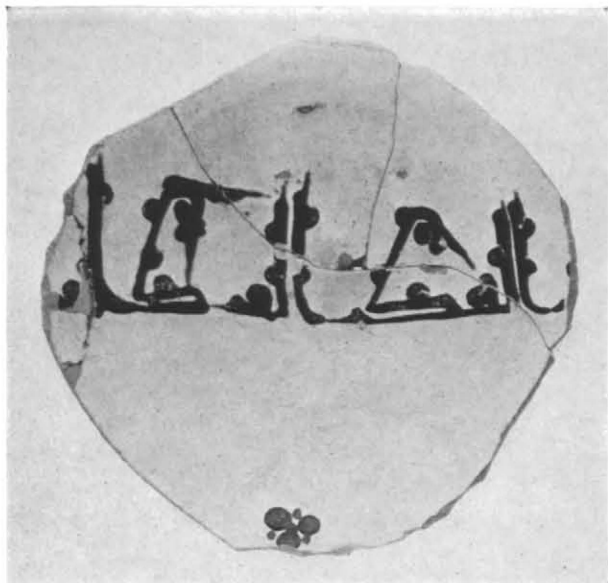
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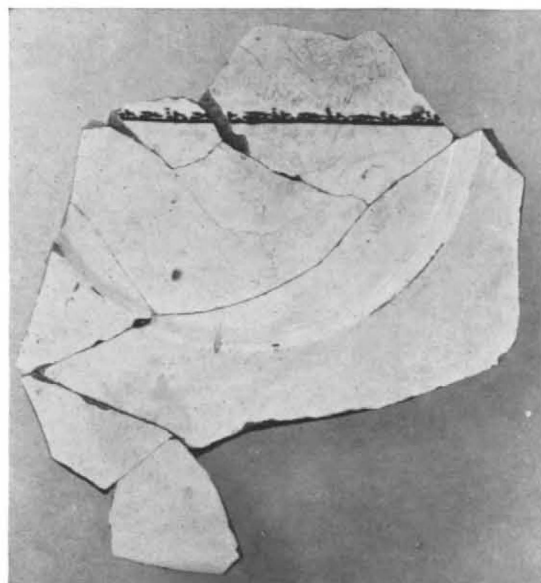
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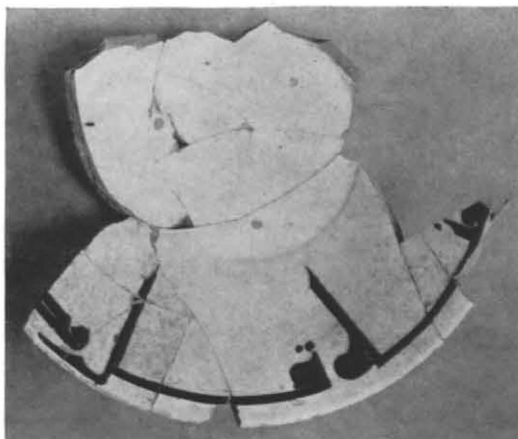


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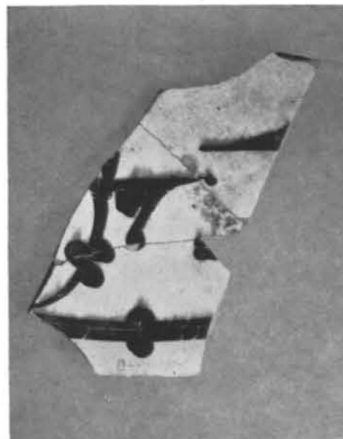


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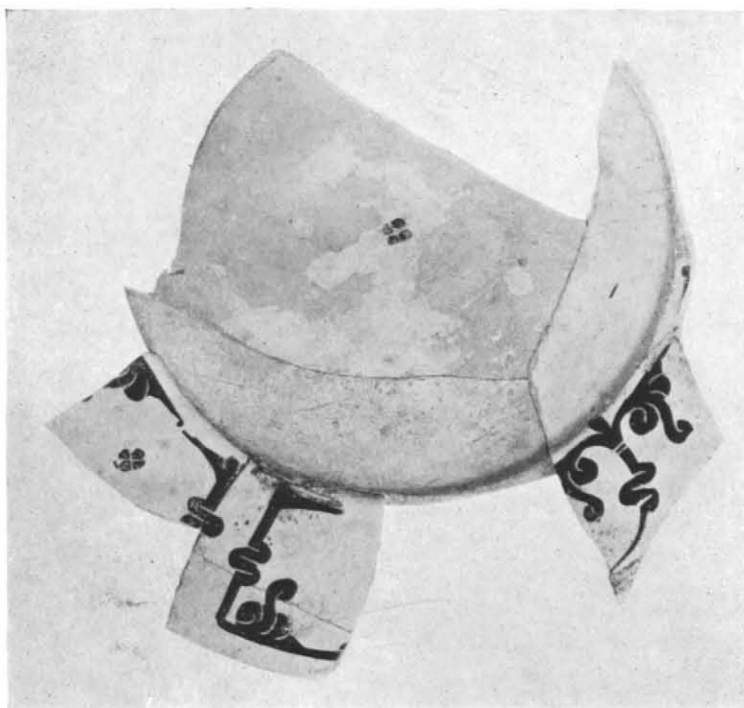
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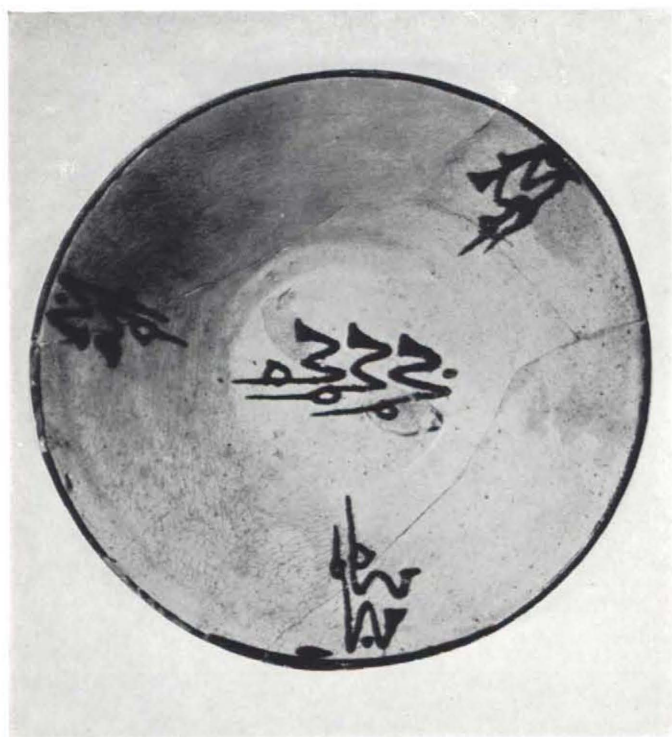


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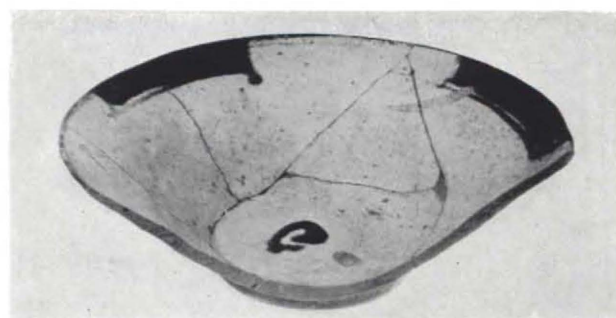


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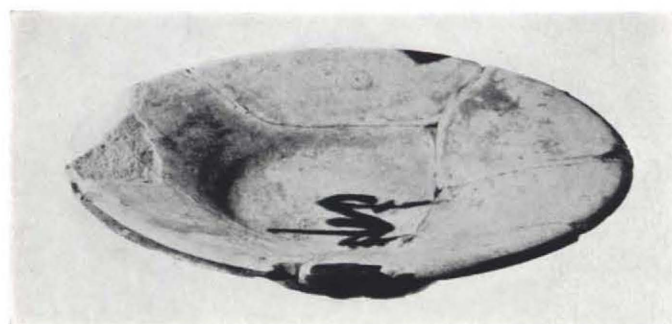
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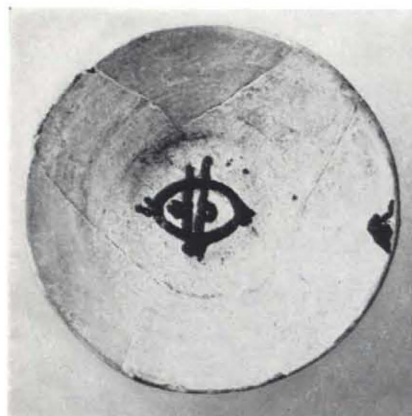


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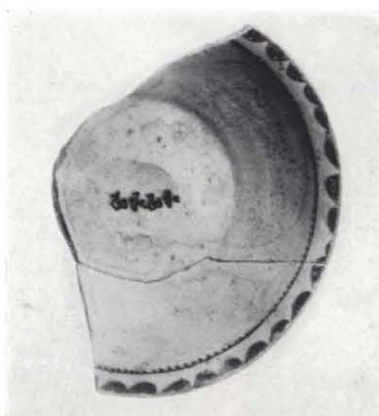


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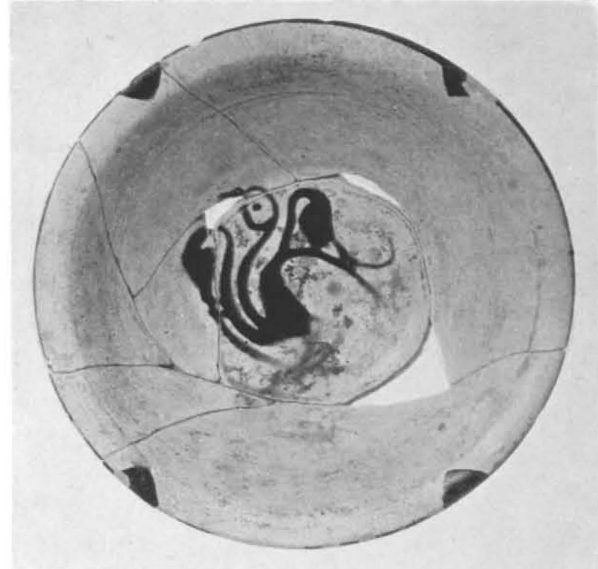
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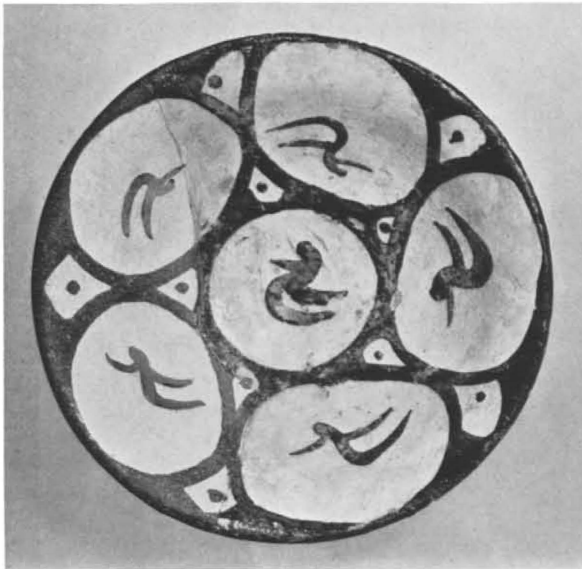
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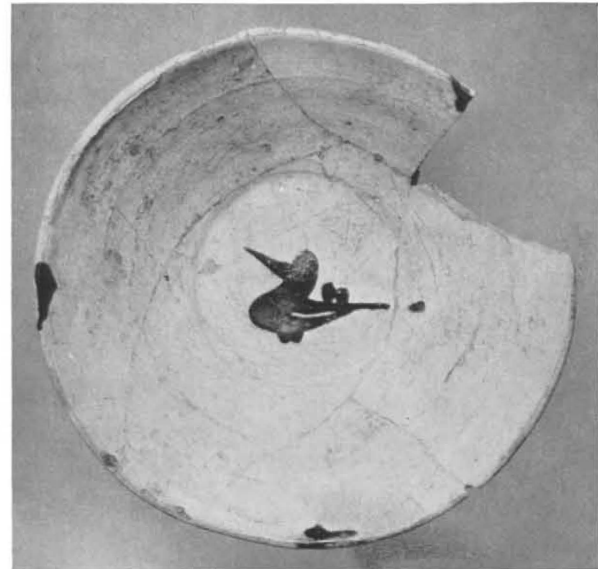
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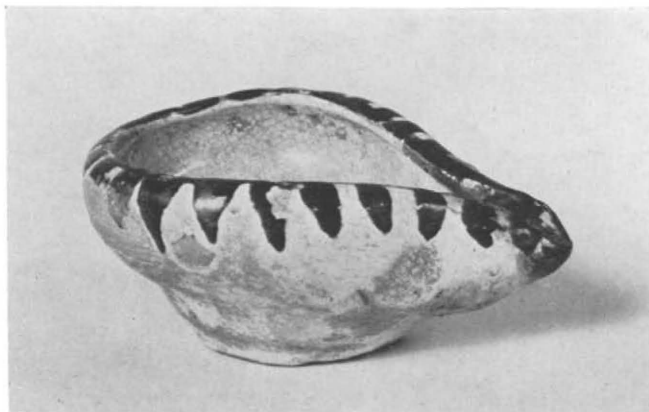
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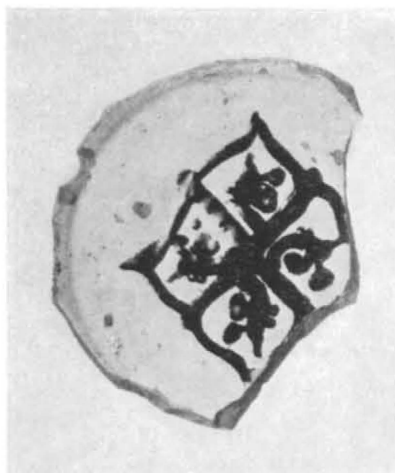


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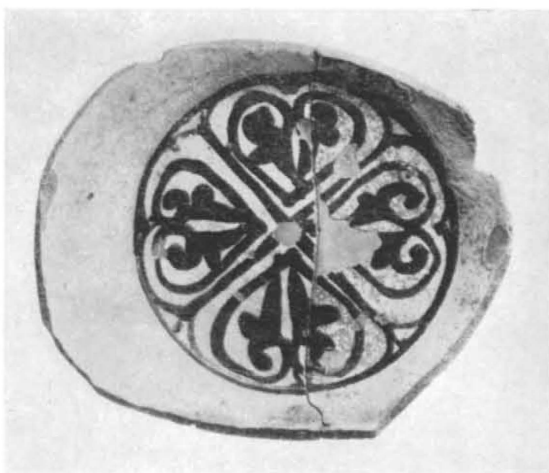


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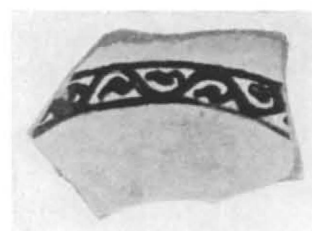




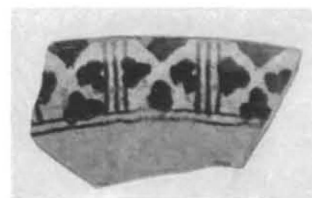
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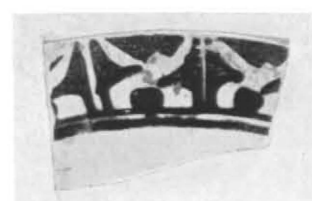
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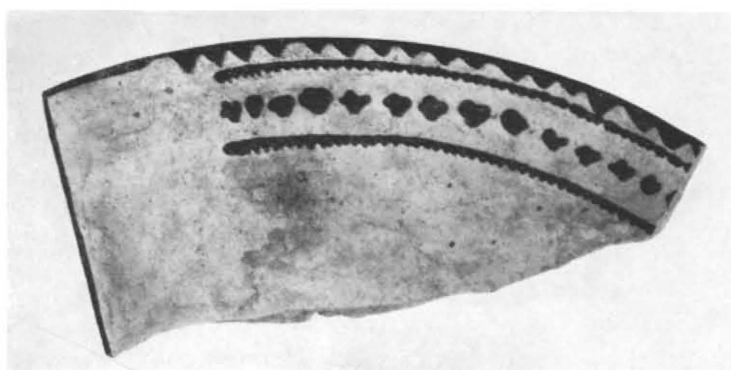


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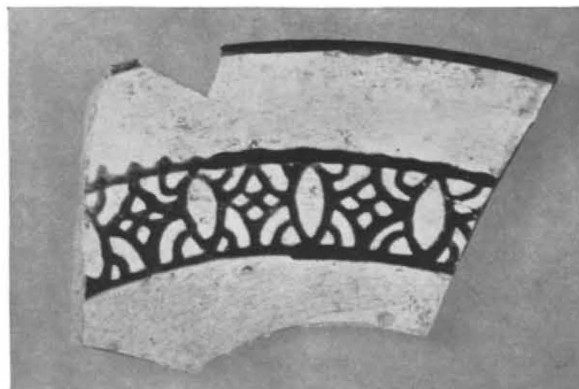
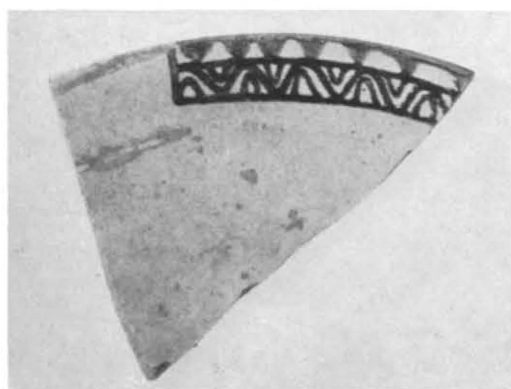
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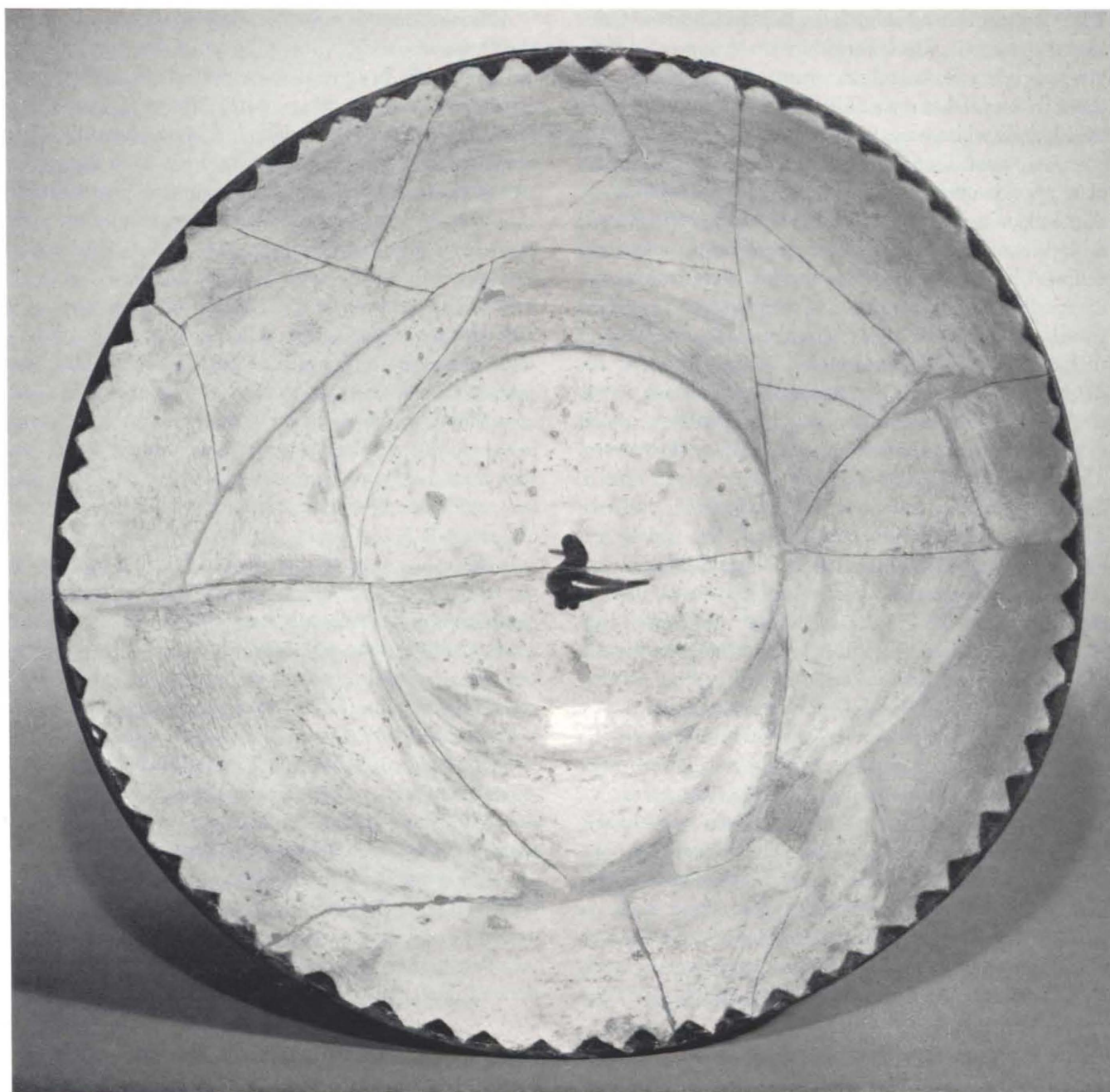
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89a



89b



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4

Polychrome on White Ware

The potters of Khurasan and Transoxiana used not only a simple black to decorate their earthenware coated with white slip, but black in combination with other colors. The most popular combination was black and red (Color Plate 5, page xvi). The other colors are olive green, bright green, bright yellow, and raw sienna. On no piece are all these colors used at once. The black varies, as it does in the black on white ware, usually having either a purple or a brown cast (Color Plate 6, page xvii). The clear lead glaze applied over the pigments is sometimes stained by the black in its immediate vicinity. In a few pieces (44, 47) a black containing chrome tints the glaze a transparent yellow. The red, at its best, is a fine tomato red that shows up vividly on the white engobe and provides an excellent contrast to the black (3, 4, 12, 14, 19, 26). On some of these pieces the red is as intense as that found on the Turkish wares of Isnik, and the fact that this color, in the ceramics of Iran and Transoxiana, is apparently restricted to the present ware seems an extraordinary abstinence. The duller, poorer reds approach orange or red brown, the latter a tonality commoner in Afrasiyab than in Nishapur. The material, a slip, contains iron. It is usually applied thickly; when applied thinly it produces only an orange stain (18, 21). The olive green, also an opaque slip, is applied thickly. It varies from a full olive to a greenish gray, and it sometimes yellows the glaze slightly at the edges of its application. The bright green, a transparent color derived from a copper base, is similar to that used on other Nishapur pottery, notably the buff and the color-splashed wares. It appears in the polychrome ware infrequently and less often in Nishapur than Afrasiyab. The transparent yellow was not often used in Nishapur, and the raw sienna was employed for linear decoration only.

The clay body of the polychrome on white ware is usually reddish, varying in color like that of the black on white. A few of the vessels are made of a well-levigated, compact, strongly red clay that is so smooth as to be almost shiny (48, 59). Because no wasters of this type have

been found anywhere, such pieces cannot yet be assigned to a particular place of manufacture. The clay is characteristic neither of Nishapur nor Afrasiyab.

Although there is a great variety of shape and size in the ware as found in Nishapur, most of the vessels do not differ markedly in either of these respects from the closely associated black on white ware. However, one shape found in the present ware is found in no other. This is a bowl with a silhouette that tapers down from the rim in an almost straight line and then at the base, immediately above the foot ring, cuts in almost horizontally (in some cases even forming a groove), the change of direction corresponding to the angle between the bowl's interior wall and the bottom (20). A feature of such bowls is a base with a well-turned foot ring rather than the ordinary slight concavity or beveled recess. In section, the two sides of this foot ring are vertical, the inner side in some cases blending into the base. Another characteristic shape in the polychrome bowls is a sharply upturned rim that rises from a ridge on the exterior wall (52–55). This feature, unlike the silhouette just noted, occurs also in bowls of Groups 2, 5, and 9.

It might be imagined that, simply with the addition of red to the color scheme, there would be no substantial modification of the designs found in the black on white ware. This is not the case, however. Apart from some exceptions among the polychrome vessels decorated with certain types of inscription or pseudo inscription (17, 40), the decoration of the two wares is quite different. There is even a difference of spirit. Restraint in the application of ornament is one of the chief characteristics of the black on white ware; with the addition of red, the restraint tends to disappear. There are, it is true, a number of vessels of fine quality with well-drawn ornament applied in restricted areas only (3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 12, 13, 16, 17, 31, 36, 41), but many have a closely packed decoration or a pattern that repeats evenly over the entire surface. Decorations of the latter kind may consist of some simple motif

such as a petal (6) or a disk with superimposed spots (8). Whereas the petal motif occurs on bowls of both normal and small size, the dotted disk, used in this fashion, seems to occur only on small bowls and dishes.

The chief decoration on the walls of many bowls in this ware consists of Arabic script (4) or pseudo script (32, 39, 40). As it is in the black on white ware, this calligraphic decoration is treated in many ways. The letters may be adorned with flourishes (4, 9), interweavings (41), or knottings (14). They may be supplemented by some such element as an interwoven band (16), or they may themselves be turned into a decorative band (32). The inscription may encircle the wall in continuous text without repeating (11), it may continuously repeat a word or two (2, 10, 12), or it may appear in short lengths (9). When in short lengths and presenting one or two words repeated, the unit may alternate with some small decorative feature (17, 31). Repetitive inscriptions in continuous form may appear in two bands (19) or even more.

The actual forms of the letters are generally not different from those occurring in the black on white ware, exceptions being an extremely broad treatment (4), an incorporation of repeated blocklike half-leaves in a debased inscription (13), and an extreme elongation of wavy verticals (9). Just as these forms are not represented in the black on white ware, certain forms typical of the black on white—the letters with large triangular heads or with foliated tops (Group 3, 14, 15)—are not seen here. In treatment, the inscriptions range from the boldness of 4 to the refinement of 41, from the constant width of letter exemplified on 4 to the contrasts of 2, from the static quality of 14 to the active cursive hand of 11. Not duplicated in the black on white ware is a particular type of simple lettering, closely packed, its verticals giving the impression of radii, as they repeat continuously around the wall (18–21, 27).

The inscriptions are commonly in black, occasionally in red, and, on rare examples, in green. Letters in red are often outlined in black (4) or given black touches (35). Letters in green (none are illustrated) always resemble those of 19 and 30; they are outlined in black when on a red ground, in red when on a white ground. In some of the inscriptions that encircle a wall, most of the letters will be in black, with a few in red. This change of color was probably an imitation of a long-familiar custom in Arabic manuscripts, in which certain words are written in red. The change of color in the ceramic inscriptions has no demonstrable significance, and one may assume that the potter either lacked literary understanding or chose to ignore it in favor of artistic sensibility. Occasionally the lettering or pseudo lettering is painted in reserve, especially in a group of vessels whose color scheme includes olive green (43, 45, 47).

A tendency in the polychrome on white ware, as mentioned earlier, is to treat an inscription as a band of decoration. This is achieved by various expedients, such as adding decorative forms in another color (34) or adding outlined areas filled with dots and other elements (1, 10, 11). The latter treatment, unknown in the black on white ware, is also to be seen in the ware decorated with yellow-staining black (Group 8, 11, 12), which ware in turn has relationships to luster ware of the tenth and eleventh centuries (Group 6, 39). The fashion of the dotted areas was widespread. The earliest known use of such compartments in conjunction with inscriptions occurs in a manuscript of about 955 (Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript in the Chester Beatty Library*, p. 18, n.1, pl. viia). Another way of converting an inscription into a band of decoration was to add vertical strokes among the letters (27); these strokes are frequently decorated with a bead of black (19, 26).

Aside from bowls decorated with a repeating small motif or one of the many forms of inscription, there are examples treated in a more ornamental style, for instance, 22 and 28. In a few cases the design is enlarged to cover both walls and bottom—the bird on 46, for example, and the human figure of 48. In Nishapur the introduction of human figures is generally confined to the buff ware. The connections between the two wares are not strong, amounting only to the presence in both of such figural representations and the use of a particular rim decoration of grouped vertical lines and spaces (58).

A simpler, more formal style of overall decoration is that of introducing wide bands, usually four, that extend to the rim from a small square in the center (51) or that appear to overlap there (52–55), producing an effect of rotation. The use of this type of decoration, found also in Afrasiyab, Gurgan, and Lashkari Bazar, continued in the eleventh century.

A prominent decorative feature of this ware is a band painted in color and then adorned by simple dots of white slip or, more elaborately, by rosettes dotted with white slip. The simply dotted bands, which are also common in the pottery of Merv, Afrasiyab, and Gurgan, may circumscribe a wall (19, 20) or bottom (20), define compartments of various shapes (23, 28), or appear in interwoven form on the bottom of a bowl (20). The bands with dotted rosettes usually appear near the rim (20).

The rim decorations of the polychrome on white bowls are rarely as important as they are in the black on white ware, where they sometimes constitute nearly the entire design. One of the favorite rim decorations in the black on white ware, the rectangle of black with a solid line or a line of dots often added beneath it, was not found in the present ware during the course of the Metropolitan's excavations. However, a polychrome bowl found later, re-

putedly in Nishapur, has two such labels alternating with a very conventional leafy assembly (*Sept mille ans d'art en Iran* Exhibition Catalogue, no. 589). Another common rim decoration in the black on white ware, a wave pattern, expressed as a simple wavy line supplemented by dots, appears in the present ware infrequently, and then only in a complicated version (7, 14). Just as the simple wave pattern does not appear in the polychrome ware, so certain rim patterns common in the polychrome are unknown in the black on white. The most conspicuous of these is a simple edging of circular spots (18, 20, 21, 26, 28, 29). This decoration, which is also to be seen in the opaque yellow ware of Nishapur (Group 7, 1-4), occurs in wares with colored engobe of Afrasiyab (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pls. XIII, XXII), the polychrome on white of Gurgan (Metropolitan's sherd collection), and bowls of the so-called Sari type, some of which may have come from Gurgan (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 21B). The edging of spots also occurs in the ninth-century luster ware of Iraq (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. XIII, no. 2). One rim motif that the present ware and the black on white ware of Nishapur share is the sawtooth, used either continuously (6, 14) or in limited lengths (7, 40a). Its color, in this ware, is always black. Less frequently found in the present ware than in the black on white, it does not occur on any bowls to which green has been added.

A further distinction between the polychrome ware and the black on white ware of Nishapur can be seen in their exterior decoration. Hardly appearing in the black on white ware, exterior decoration is reasonably common here. The type most often seen is a cable pattern in black near the rim (20b). Certain patterns, such as a group of four curved strokes (2, 11), seem to be peculiar to this

ware. About the decorated circles and vertical lines on the exterior of 48 no conclusion can be drawn, since the bowl is exceptional. The streaks of color found on the exteriors of color-splashed bowls are not to be seen on the polychrome bowls, nor are the claw-shaped strokes of black or the V-shapes filled with vertical strokes that are so common in the buff ware—yet another indication that each ware had its own repertoire of designs for the outside as well as the inside and that this exclusiveness applied even to the simplest of motifs.

Comparison of the many pieces of this ware known to have come from Afrasiyab and the vicinity of Samarkand with those known to have come from Nishapur reveals that a great body of the eastern ware was either not imported to Nishapur at all or imported in such small quantity that it was not found in the excavations. Typical Afrasiyab pieces are distinguished by the wide strokes of the calligraphy on the wall, foliate forms or interlaced bands on the bottom, or a decoration on the wall of interlaced bands and open hearts.

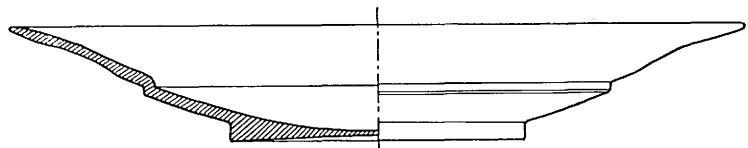


1 PLATTER

D 38.8, H 6.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

The only complete platter of this ware found, this finely made piece was retrieved with 2 from a well that had been sunk from an upper-level plaster floor in an important building, the location indicating a date not earlier than the last part of the tenth century and perhaps later. The base is slightly concave, the center very thin. A ridge on the exterior corresponds to the vertical rise from the bottom on the interior. 1 and 2 resemble one another in the quality of their color. Their red is a little dull (see Color Plate 5, page xvi) in contrast to the intense red of 3, 4, and 9, and their white, unlike the pure white of the latter

pieces, has a yellow tinge. The inscription on 1, undeciphered, is drawn in a brownish black pigment heavily loaded with clay; it lacks the precision of the inscription on 2. The base of the letters is at the rim. The heavy ring painted at the juncture of the rim and bottom is typical of the pottery of Afrasiyab. So too are the dotted compartments that occupy the spaces between the letters and contain black-centered "eyes" and flowerets. Dotted compartments like these are to be seen on several examples of this ware (10, 11). Since they are more common on Afrasiyab bowls, they may be considered an indication of



1:4

importation. Several bowls found in Afrasiyab have one or more points of resemblance to 1 (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pls. VII, XVIII, XX, upper).

A Nishapur bowl in the Freer Gallery of Art (*Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, fig. 6) has dotted compartments filled with a small quatrefoil with a white center. In addition to the black and red of 1, this bowl has spots of green; a common feature in Afrasiyab, such spots are almost unknown in the polychrome on white ware made in Nishapur. The form of its whirling center is also characteristic of Afrasiyab.

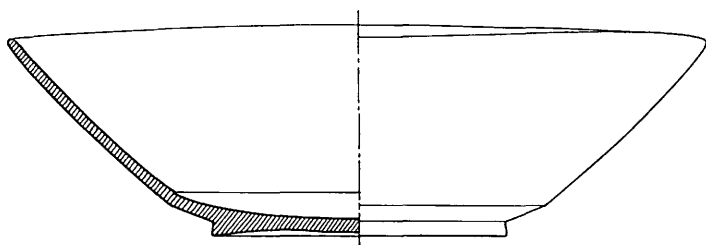
Fragments of platters similar to 1, though of inferior quality, were found elsewhere in the excavations, the glaze of one having a strong green cast. Some of these fragments are in the Metropolitan Museum, others in Teheran.

2 BOWL

D 35.8, H 10.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MMA 40.170.15

(Color Plate 5, page xvi)



1:4

Found with 1, complete except for one small fragment. Reddish body, buff surface, warm white engobe. The base, slightly concave, is thickened at the center, in which respect it is like the base of 9. Base has no engobe but is glazed. The sides flare widely for a short distance, then less so for the remainder of the height. The change of angle near the base is characteristic of many bowls of this ware.

Decorating the inside wall is an Arabic inscription, the base of the letters toward the rim. It is drawn with more finesse than the inscription on 1, the greater contrast between thick and thin strokes giving it more elegance. It reads: *Barakeh we al ghabta we al ni 'met we al-salameh we al sa 'det al [?]* (blessing, prosperity, good will, health, and happiness to you). As is often the case in this ware, there is no difference made between a *kaf* and a *dal*

(*ta*), but the *dal* which in some inscriptions in the black on white ware resembles the *kaf*, is here entirely different, for it is doubled closely together and has practically no oblique stroke above it. The final *kaf* is a solid blob, and the *ain* and the *ghain* are always placed above the connecting links that are a feature here and on many other examples of this ware.

Roughly following the form of the letters are compartments outlined in red filled with a hatching of thick black strokes alternating with thin red ones. This particular type of decoration was found on no other bowl in Nishapur. The nearest resemblances occur on some polychrome on white bowls of Afrasiyab (G. Migeon, *L'Orient musulman*, Paris, 1922, pl. 17, no. 151; Pézard, *Céramique*, pl. xciv, top); the hatching on these pieces, however, is in one color only, and the lines are of equal thickness.

The treatment on the bottom of 2, a formal design of interweaving bands and palmettes in red outline on a black-dotted ground, contained within a boldly drawn black circle, is again unusual in Nishapur, strengthening the case for importation. The motif seen on the exterior, consisting of four semicircular strokes, appears six times around the bowl. The same motif occurs on the exterior of 11.

The dotted ground on the bottom of 2 also occurs on a bowl reputedly and probably from Nishapur, acquired by the Metropolitan in 1956 (56.44; Dimand, *Handbook*, fig. 100). In this bowl the dotting is used both as the background for the center decoration and on the wall between the letters of an inscription. The center decoration, consisting of a palmette growing out of a pair of half-palmettes, is drawn in a style reminiscent of pieces found in Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 244, fig. 15), a city that had many kilns operating in the tenth century. The drawing is less sure than on 2, the color poorer, the red being yellowish, the black, brownish.

3 BOWL

D 34.5, H 12.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe

MMA 39.40.79

Covered inside and outside with pure white engobe. The glaze, colorless, covers all but the base; in some places it has spalled, due to the thickness of the engobe. The base, turned thin, has a foot ring. The exterior is without decoration. The colors on the interior are a vivid red and an intense purplish black. Thanks to the whiteness of the engobe and the transparency of the glaze, the effect is brilliant. The Kufic letters at the left, black on red, have their outlines scratched through to the engobe. The inscription consists of two words several times repeated: probably *al yumn* (happiness) in a degenerate form (Pope, *Survey*, II, p. 1754, fig. 609). Above a row of black dots, somewhat run in the glaze, is a secondary inscription, in red only; this was repeated on the opposite (incomplete)

wall. This inscription offers an excellent example of the disintegration of Kufic into a formal pattern. The model was perhaps the word *barakeh* (blessing) (ibid., fig. 608 K). This particular form, much used in the latter part of the tenth century, continued in the Ghaznavid period early in the eleventh century, as we know from the excavations at Lashkari Bazar, the site of a Ghaznavid palace (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, pls. XIII, no. 126, XIV, B₁). For a variation of the form in the black on white ware, see Group 3, 57.

It has proved impossible to reconstruct the design on the bottom of the bowl. The black object seen at the left may be the remains of a small bottle or, more probably, the lower portion of a tall narrow-footed ewer with a thin handle and a long, thin spout. The assembly of half-palmettes, leafy forms, and circles to be seen at the right perhaps rose from the bottle or ewer on a stalk. A polychrome on white bowl from the British Museum, reputedly from Nishapur (Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, November, 1961, p. 110, fig. 14), is decorated with a ewer and a similar assembly thus connected. For another example, with a ewer of different shape, probably found in Nishapur, see Rice, *Islamic Art*, fig. 44. Some of the leafy forms on 3 are red, most are black. The majority of the wider white lines among the forms, left in reserve, are ornamented with black spots; the more delicate white lines are scratched through the pigment to the engobe. The assembly as a whole recalls the ornamental projections of chapter headings seen in Korans of the ninth century and later (T. Arnold & A. Grohmann, *The Islamic Book*, Paris, 1929, pl. 10; Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting*, p. 168; Abbott, *Ars Islamica*, VIII, p. 80). Even the detail of dots within the dividing white line is known (Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript in the Chester Beatty Library*, pls. III, IX, fol. 282r). Fragments of an Afrasiyab bowl with a generally similar assembly are to be seen in Cohn-Wiener Photograph 1 in the Metropolitan (page 364). On this bowl the ornament does not have the heavily outlined red disks seen on 3; instead it is flanked by ovals containing a central spot, resembling an eye. (A comparable "eye" occurs on 5.) For assemblies reminiscent of 3, but of simpler construction, on bowls said to be, and probably, found in Nishapur in recent years, see *Sept mille ans d'art en Iran* Exhibition Catalogue, nos. 588, 589. In these bowls there is no ewer, and the assemblies, appearing twice, are connected by a line that crosses the bottom of the vessel. Very simple forms, sometimes more crude, consisting of fanlike assemblies connected by a simple line, were found in Afrasiyab (Stoliarov Photograph 3, row A, no. 2, page 367; Cohn-Wiener, *Asia*, February, 1941, fig. 5; Tashkhodzhaev, *Artistic Glazed Ceramics of Samarkand*, p. 105, fig. 23). Even in very complicated versions of this motif the basic structure of a line joining two tridentlike assemblies persists (ibid., p. 110, fig. 24). In Afrasiyab this type of decoration seems to be stiffer than that in Nishapur, as is well exemplified by a bowl illustrated in Pugachenkova & Rempel, *History of Art of*

Uzbekistan, fig. 232. It is dated by the authors to the eleventh or twelfth century.

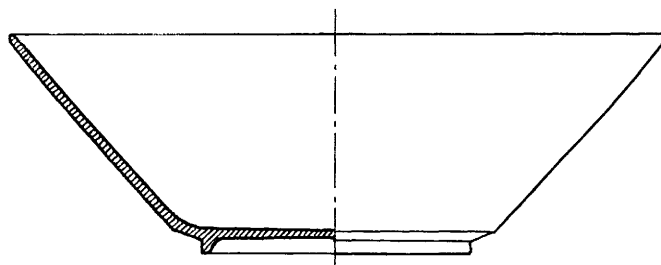
Filling out the decoration on 3 are several rosettes consisting of six black spots surrounding a seventh. Larger, more elaborate versions of this ornament, with short lines radiating between the spots, occur on 28 and 29. A more elaborate version also occurs on the British Museum's bowl mentioned above, with dots rather than lines added between the spots.

The place of manufacture of bowls exemplified by 3, which is of the tenth or eleventh century, has yet to be established, despite a theory that it was Afrasiyab (Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, XIV, p. 12, fig. 9). It may well have been Nishapur, where the finest examples have been found, but no wasters of such bowls have yet been discovered in either location. The simpler forms referred to in the preceding paragraph were surely made in Afrasiyab and perhaps elsewhere as well.

4 a,b BOWL

D 26.5, H 8.9 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MMA 36.20.57



1:3

Turned evenly and thinly, the base made with a foot ring. A sharp change of angle occurs on the exterior where the wall and base join. The whole of the vessel is covered with engobe; the glaze covers all but the base. No decoration on the exterior. The fragments have been correctly assembled with the possible exception of the group of letters at the top (in 4a) and the upper fragment on the right. The letters, which have their bases at the rim, are an intense red, outlined in a deep black that here and there is purplish. The ornamental foliations that grow out of the letters and the small fishlike motif on the bottom are also black. The engobe is pure white, the glaze colorless, the effect brilliant. The delicate leafy forms that make such a striking contrast to the massive Kufic letters are a feature of an eighth-century Egyptian script seen on gravestones (Hassan, *Al-fann al-Islāmī fī Miṣr*, I, pl. 20). In the present bowl they must be considered an archaism. In shape and quality 4 is linked with many others (3, for example) that cannot be dated earlier than the end of the tenth century.

5 a,b BOWL

D 26, H 8.8 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

A vessel of the same shape as 4, even to the sharp change of angle on the exterior where wall and base meet. However, the decoration lacks 4's precision of drawing, brilliance of color, and elaboration of motif. The letters of the repetitive radial "inscription" seen at the right are in red outlined with black, with a horizontal black stroke across the center. Opposite the letters is an outlined band containing a braid of short interwoven strokes. Spaced between these designs at the rim are two tuliplike forms, their exteriors having little excrescences, their centers decorated with a median stroke and two dots. (The tulip-like forms are sometimes identified in art history books as lotus buds.) Alternating with these four units is an eye-like motif consisting of a circular ring with a large spot in the center. On the bottom is a simple black spot.

Related bowls have been found in Nishapur and other centers. An Afrasiyab bowl (Cohn-Wiener Photograph 2, page 365) has the same kind of "inscription," same band of braid, and same tuliplike motif. In Afrasiyab the tulip-like device was employed in various closely related forms (Tashkhodzhaev, *Artistic Glazed Ceramics of Samarkand*, p. 117, fig. 29). A close relative of the tuliplike form has been found in the pottery of Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 270, fig. 29). A polychrome on white bowl in the British Museum (cited at 3 in another connection) shows an elaboration of this form in that it is enclosed within two half-palmettes. A related piece, ascribed by A. U. Pope to Rayy (Pope, *Survey*, II, p. 1476, fig. 525), was doubtless made somewhere to the east of Rayy, perhaps Nishapur. The eyelike motif of 5 is to be seen on bowls from Afrasiyab and was further developed in Gurgan and provided with a stalk; it appears as a flower on bowls of the Sari type, two of which are in the Metropolitan (24.147.2; Wilkinson, *Iranian Ceramics*, pl. 30). For another example, see Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 21B. Drawings of three versions of the tuliplike motif are shown:



6 BOWL

D 27.3, H 7.7 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

In shape like many of the bowls of this ware, with a sharp change of angle on the exterior near the foot ring. The exterior is covered with engobe and glaze but is undecorated. The base is covered with engobe but is unglazed.

Decoration: a sawtooth at the rim and a petal motif repeated. The sawtooth and the two round spots that comprise the upper part of the petal are in purplish black; the lower portion of the petal, a roughly triangular dot slightly separated from the others, is red. Although the motifs may be viewed as placed in concentric rings, the potter had a more elaborate pattern in mind. He first placed two lines of the motif across the bowl from rim to rim, crossing them at right angles in the center. Each quadrant thus formed was then filled with a V of seven of the motifs, within which was placed a V of three. A variation of the motif, consisting of three separate circular spots, two of red and one of black, was found on a fragment of a thinly potted bowl; this fragment is in the Metropolitan (40.170.488a,b). Bowls decorated in the manner of 6 were found in Afrasiyab by Stoliarov, but it is not possible to say unequivocally that such bowls were made in one city or the other, or both. A small bowl found since 1940, probably in Nishapur, has been deemed a product of Afrasiyab (Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, XIV, p. 12, fig. 11). For the use of the petal motif in another ware of Nishapur, see Group 5, 46.

The motif, an ancient one, figures in various decorations of the pre-Islamic and early Islamic eras. It occurs in textiles of the third century found at Dura-Europus (A. C. Weibel, *Two Thousand Years of Textiles*, New York, 1952, pl. 2), Coptic textiles of Egypt of approximately the fourth to the seventh century (O. Wulff & W. F. Volbach, *Spätantike und Koptische Stoffe aus Ägyptischen Grabfunden*, Berlin, 1926, pls. 1, 7, 47), and in a silk twill of the Sasanian period or shortly thereafter (Pope, *Survey*, IV, pl. 201 B). In many instances the details are omitted, and the petal appears as a "heart," for example, in Sasanian stucco decoration (ibid., pl. 173A; Metropolitan Museum 32.150.4), Sasanian and post-Sasanian metal dishes (Pope, *Survey*, IV, pls. 215 B, 216 A; Sarre, *Die Kunst des Alten Persien*, pl. 110), and ninth-century wall paintings at Samarra (*Excavations at Samarra, 1936-1939*, I, pl. LIII, upper; Herzfeld, *Die Malereien von Samarra*, pl. XLII, figs. 8, 10, 11). Yet in spite of the almost universal use of this motif in the decorative arts, for some unexplained reason only in Khurasan and Transoxiana was it used in the decoration of glazed earthenware. It appears not only on these vessels with a white engobe but on vessels with a colored engobe (Group 5, 38, 39, 46).

7 BOWL (restored)

D 13.5, H 4 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.222

A finely made piece. Buff body. Base, flat, is covered with engobe and is partly glazed. The engobe is pure white, the glaze colorless, producing a brilliant effect. A narrow band containing an elaboration of a wave design crosses the bowl from rim to rim; two short lengths of the band are placed near the rim on opposite walls, beneath a

length of sawtooth. The outlines of the bands and of the forms within them are red; the sawtooth and the hatching in the bands are black. In the Tashkent Museum is a small bowl of similar quality with a comparable band, its motif consisting of simulated Kufic constructed of curved red lines supplemented with black spots.

8 BOWL

D 12.3, H 3.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.57

Red body, white engobe. Decoration: rows of disks painted red with superimposed black spots, the colors less brilliant than those of 6 and 7. This decoration was also used on small dishes with vertical sides; part of such a dish, found in the same location as 8, is in the Teheran museum:



1:3

9 BOWL

D 47.5, H 16.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

The largest of the red and black on white bowls found, this is shaped like 2, even to the slightly concave, thickened base. The clay is red, the engobe pure white, the glaze colorless. As on 3 and 4, the red is brilliant, the black intense. The drawing is precise, with scratching used throughout to produce the white lines. On the bottom, a black rosette made of four heart-shaped petals defined by white hairlines, a motif used in various media from Transoxiana to Egypt (O. Wulff & W. F. Volbach, *Spätantike und Koptische Stoffe aus Ägyptischen Grabfunden*, Berlin, 1926, pl. 69). At the rim, bases toward the rim, three (probably once four) groups of letters, unread, in black

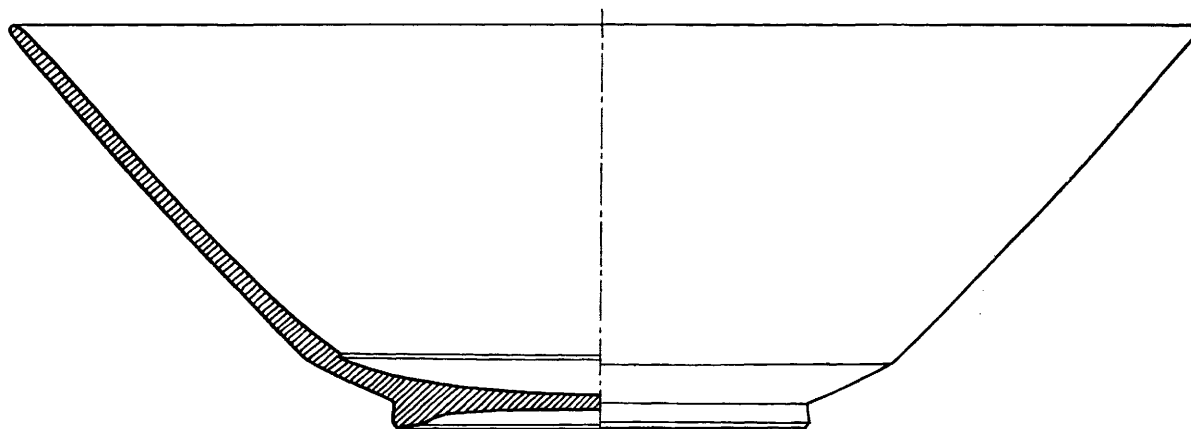
and red. Their vertical extensions are greatly prolonged, and thanks to a series of humps, give the impression of being wavy. For further discussion of this point, see Group 3, 38. Some of the letters end in triple forms, roughly triangular, others in foliations, one with a curving stem enclosing a palmette. These extensions of the letters are likewise humped. This form of calligraphy goes back at least to the first quarter of the tenth century, since it is found on an Egyptian textile dated H. 304 (916/7) (Upton, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Studies*, 3, p. 159, fig. 4). The Nishapur bowl is of the same century but somewhat later. Whether it, and bowls like it, were made in Nishapur as well as Afrasiyab, or only in Afrasiyab, has yet to be determined.

Another form of lettering with wavy verticals occurs in the black on white ware (Group 3, 52, 53). Yet another form is to be seen on a plate, probably from Afrasiyab, in which the letters have humps on one side only (Pope, *Survey*, II, p. 1764, fig. 618). This piece would seem to be of later date than 9 since it also has the knotted Kufic so popular with the Seljuqs of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

10 a,b BOWL

D 19, H 7 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Red body. The bowl flares widely, but the wall curves inward toward the top, making a graceful transition. The principal decoration is a band of inscription repeating the word *barakeh* (blessing). This is enclosed between two strong lines of black, the lower of which forms the base of the letters. The script, with its short curving strokes ending in circular blobs, is not typical of Nishapur. The shapes between the letters are outlined in red and tinted a clear yellow. The dots within the shapes and the sawtooth rim pattern are black. Beneath the base line of the inscription are two thin red lines. On the bottom (10b) two curved black strokes forming a C enclose three thin red strokes. On the exterior (10a) are arrow shapes surmounted by an inverted V, the motif painted alternately



9 1:3

red and black. The script, the unusual exterior decoration, and the fact that only one such bowl was found, all indicate that 10 was an import.

11 a,b BOWL

D 22.5, H 11 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Of the same shape as 10. Two inscriptions in a cursive form of Kufic are painted in black, one across the bottom, the other around the wall, with the bases of the letters toward the rim. Beyond the fact that these inscriptions do not repeat a single word, they are undeciphered. The dotted shapes between the letters on the wall, outlined in red as on 10, are here left with a white ground. A broad red ring encircles the bowl beneath the inscription. The decoration on the exterior (11a), composed of semicircular strokes, duplicates that on 2 and appears to mark 11 as an import.

12 BOWL FRAGMENT

D 26, H 9 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

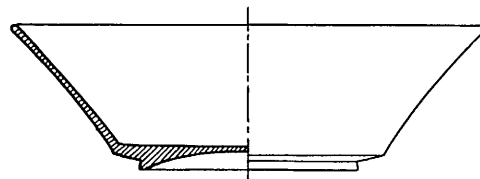
Turned evenly and thinly with change of angle above the foot ring, both features characteristic of bowls decorated in intense red and black on a pure white engobe. The gray area seen at the left is the surface of the body, exposed by the spalling of both glaze and engobe. The exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is undecorated. The main inscription, in purplish black, apparently consists of the words *al barr* (beneficence) repeated. The Kufic letters point downward from a base line that was painted solid and divided as necessary by means of a point. The tops of the pairs of tall letters, probably the definite article *al*, have been arbitrarily joined, contrary to the rules of Arabic calligraphy. The secondary inscription, in red, is meaningless pseudo Kufic like that of the secondary inscription on 3, a bowl with similar physical characteristics. A great number of fragments of bowls with similar decoration were found. Some were of different shape: low, with upturned rim. In some the black inscription was in smaller letters, and the red inscription, similar to the black, was made continuous. In 1954 the Metropolitan acquired a complete bowl from Nishapur (54.141) so like 12 that it may have been made by the same potter. This type of decoration is also to be seen in some examples from Afrasiyab, but these are not always of the excellence that appears to prevail in Nishapur. It is therefore by no means unlikely that 12 was locally made.

13 BOWL

D 21.5, H 7.3 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 40.170.5

Red body. Poorly potted, with strongly concave base of a

type seldom seen in Nishapur. A Kufic inscription on one wall, its base toward the rim, reads *al yumn* (happiness). An *alef* and a *lam* have been added to it for symmetry. A study fragment from Nishapur in the Metropolitan has the same type of writing, but the piece itself differs in having a transparent yellow glaze. This type of writing occurs in the glazed ware of Afrasiyab (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. II, right); fragments from Afrasiyab in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, show similar scripts with the same horizontal tops to the letters. The same formula, written in the same style, was popular in many places, appearing alone or with supplementary decoration. It occurs in conjunction with small birds on a small bowl allegedly found in Nishapur and considered to be an importation there (Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, X, p. 11, fig. 9). On the opposite wall of 13 is a decorative band made of a debased Kufic script. The spaces between the upright strokes are filled with *kafs* that have been converted into curling stems, each ending in a half-leaf. These are alternately red and black. A circular black spot decorated the bottom. In view of the unusual base, this is probably an import, perhaps from Afrasiyab. Probably not earlier than the end of the tenth century. A well-potted version was found in the Qanat Tepe:



1:3

14 BOWL FRAGMENT

L 29 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
Divided between MMA, 40.170.486, and MIB

Part of a large, thinly turned bowl. Buff clay. Originally the bowl was brilliant white, with decoration in intense red and black. The glaze has crackled and spalled, leaving the sawtooth border, doubtless once continuous, incomplete. Beneath this runs a band of an elaborated wave and dot pattern. Common in the black on white ware of Nishapur, this pattern is rare in the present ware. The treatment on 14 is exceptional in that both the waves and the dots are connected to the borders by means of scratched white lines. In a related fragment from Afrasiyab these connections are straight instead of curved (Pope, *Survey*, II, p. 1764, fig. 618). A second band on 16 consists of Kufic script, its base toward the rim. This is mostly in black, with two adjoining letters, one ending in a foliated S-curve, in red. The script is enriched by knottings as well as foliations. Such knottings appear on the fragment from Afrasiyab mentioned above as well as on another fragment from Afrasiyab in the Berlin Museum (Erdmann, *Faenza*, XXV, pl. xxvi g). An extreme form of this knotted Kufic is to be seen in the painted inscription of the Pir-i-'Alamdār at Damghan, Iran, built in 1027 (Pope, *Survey*,

II, fig. 588). The presence of such knottings on 14 indicates that it was probably made in the eleventh century and that it was possibly an import.

15 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 10.3 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.557

Part of a thin-walled bowl of considerable size. Buff clay. The black, thin in places, indicating that the potter's brush had run dry, has stained the glaze purplish. Decoration consists of a repetitive pseudo inscription made up of foliated S- and reverse S- forms separated by vertical strokes. Even though the decoration as preserved is entirely in black, it may originally have included red; a fragment of a related bowl in Teheran has the same design interrupted by red circles. This "double-S" motif figures in the Russian collections that come from Afrasiyab. Most of these seem to be more coarsely drawn than those found in Nishapur. One cannot tell whether this means that Afrasiyab exported its best ware or whether the ware was made in both cities. Wasters have yet to be found in either place.

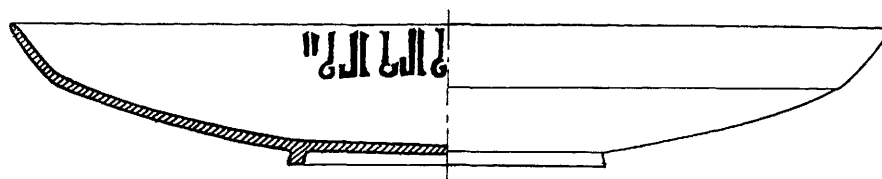
Still other fragments were found on which the encircling line is humped where the vertical lines join it.

16 FRAGMENT

W 12.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.472

Body of well-levigated reddish clay. Flaring wall has a moderate change of angle, producing a slightly upturned rim. Although vessels with vertical or almost vertical rims were common in Nishapur, the present shape was rare. It is a shape that was used in Afrasiyab (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. xx, top). Decoration: a band of Kufic inscription in black, its base toward the rim, and an ornamental band in dull red. The latter was painted solid, then scratched to give the effect of two crossing strands. This treatment was commoner in Transoxiana than in Nishapur. Because the script is similar to that on a fragment of polychrome on white ware from Afrasiyab (Erdmann, *Faenza*, XXV, pl. xxv e), 16 and a related fragment in the Teheran museum are probably the remains of imported pieces.

A low bowl with flaring wall similar to that of 16 was found in Sabz Pushan, decorated on the inside with letter-



1:3

ing like that of 12. Of the surviving fragments, none is colored red, but it is not unlikely that there was red on

the bowl as made. Centered on the bottom is a curllike device:



17 BOWL

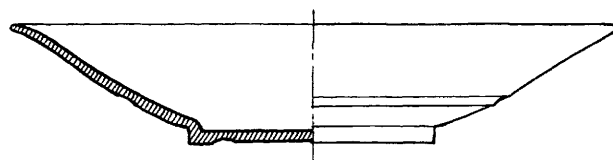
D 16.5, H 5 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 39.40.27

Reddish clay. Warm-toned glaze. Decoration around the wall of an inscription in black alternating with a yellowish red circle (one missing). The black is brownish, indicating that it contained iron in addition to manganese. The word, probably a debased form of *al yumn* (happiness), has two additional letters at the end for the sake of symmetry.

Small bowls similarly decorated, their glaze often having a yellow or green tinge, were common in Nishapur, Afrasiyab (Stoliarov Photograph 3, row B, no. 1, page 367), Bactria, and Gurgan. Since no examples were found in the lower levels of Nishapur, we know that they were not made before the late tenth century. Bowls with this simple inscriptional decoration were also made without the addition of red.

18 DISH

D 24, H 5 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 37.40.13



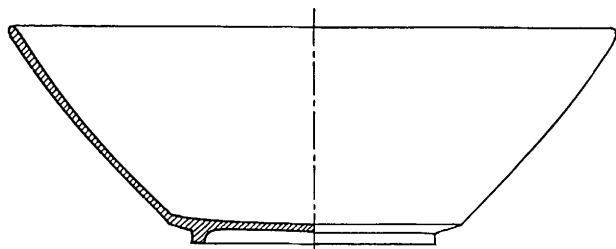
1:3

Buff clay. Poorly potted. Pigment unevenly applied, glaze yellowish. Exterior, covered with engobe, is unglazed. A groove on the exterior near the base and another near the edge of the base almost form a foot ring. The center of the base is low, however, and only slightly concave. The principal decoration, barely recognizable as Kufic script, occurs in less degenerate versions on 19, 20, 26, and 27. The vertical strokes, both wide and narrow, are purplish brown. Between the "inscription" and the spots that adorn the rim, a band of red earth is so unevenly applied that it thins

from an orange stain to near invisibility. The dotted rim occurs on other poorly made pieces (21), as well as on those of fine quality (20, 26, 28, 29). On the bottom of 18 is a red V. A number of such crudely made pieces were unearthed. They can reasonably be considered cheap versions of such a vessel as 20 and as of local manufacture.

19 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 23.6 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB



1:3

One of several closely related pieces (compare 20, 26), this has a pure white engobe and a decoration in intense red and deep black beneath a glaze that has no hint of color. The principal motif, painted in two bands, red above and black below, is a repeated formula, its base toward the rim, probably representing either *al yumn* (happiness) or *al barr* (beneficence). Between the letters of the upper band are fine black vertical lines broken by white-centered black "beads," and on the letters there are small black and white rosettes. The white spots of the latter are not pricked through the pigment but consist of applied slip. The fine white lines between the letters of the lower band are scratched through the black pigment. Separating the bands of lettering is a black band adorned with dots of white slip; a similar band below the lower inscription is probably the remains of a central decoration in the manner of 20. Lettering like that of the upper band, but without the rosettes, was found on the remains of both small and large dishes. The embellishment of the line with a "bead" upon it is to be seen in a more degenerate form in the pottery of Gurgan and Amul, for example, on a bowl in the Metropolitan (24.147.2).

20 a,b BOWL

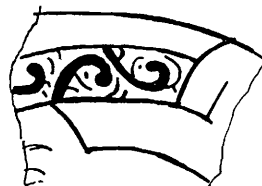
D 25, H 9.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.7

Red body. The tapering shape, which cuts in just above the base with a groove that forms the exterior of the foot ring, is characteristic of a number of vessels decorated like this, also of vessels decorated like 22. The exterior, save for the base, is covered with engobe and glaze, the latter eroded. The principal decoration on the wall consists of an "inscription," perhaps *al yumn* (happiness), repeated, in black, its base toward the rim. Alternating with the thick vertical strokes of the *alef* and *lam* is a thin stroke

of black, perhaps a decorative vertical extension above the letter *mim*.

The fine white lines between the letters have been scratched through the black. A dull yellow green, added to the color scheme, has been used for the broad band above the inscription as well as for the interlaced bands that fill the bottom. The yellow green band on the wall, edged by two narrow bands of red dotted with white, contains a row of black disks, each adorned with three dots of white slip. The rim has a row of black dots (compare 18, 21, 26, 28). The interlaced bands on the bottom, adorned with dots of white slip, are common to many bowls of this shape having similar designs on the wall. The cable pattern on the exterior (20b) is also characteristic. It occurs on 22, 26, 27, and 30.

For closely related pieces see Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 19B, and *Ceramic Art of Iran Exhibition Catalogue*, no. 63. The decoration of the bottom with dotted interlacing bands was also practiced in Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 234, fig. 9, p. 244, fig. 15). In Afrasiyab bowls were made in which interlaced bands enriched with dots were extensively used in the decoration. These bowls are usually more convex than 20 and often include narrow panels with a particular kind of half-leaf filling. As we have seen



in other instances, this is a case of a very frequent design made in Afrasiyab that never appears in Nishapur. Vessels of the shape of 20, with the groove just above the base but without a foot ring, were also made in Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 262, fig. 26, bottom right).

21 BOWL

D 26, H 9.1 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.173

Poorly made. Exterior covered with engobe but glazed only near the rim; undecorated. Base has a bevel; no engobe on base. The "Kufic" around the interior wall, although less degenerate than on 18, is essentially nothing but a simple, bold design. It is in black, as are the dots at the rim. Between these elements is a band of red slip, so sparingly applied as to be in places almost invisible (compare 18). On the bottom is a motif that appears to be an eye—a black spot within a red outline—but which is probably only a loosely drawn circle containing a disk. This feature, like the dotted rim, is also to be found on polychrome on white bowls of high quality. An example is in the collection of Richard Ettinghausen. The bottom motif also occurs in the ware decorated in yellow-staining black.

22 BOWL

D 24.8, H 10 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Like 20 in two respects, overall shape and cable pattern on exterior. Interior decoration: black half-palmettes flanking red pear shapes, with rosettes in the spaces. The half-palmettes are decorated with lines scratched through to the engobe. The pear shapes contain an ambiguous motif in black and red. Although it catches the eye thus:



The true motif was probably intended as a stem that turns upward and becomes a two-lobed half-leaf, pointed at the top and ending with a curl at the bottom:



Although intermediate examples are lacking, it is to be noted that a simplified form, without capsulation,



was used in the Parthian period as an independent motif, occurring on a metal dish found in Armenia (*Mtskheta*, I, Tiflis, 1958, p. 64, fig. 27). Probably the earliest example of the complete capsulated motif occurs on a ninth-century luster bowl from Iraq (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 11B):



In somewhat the same form it also appears on a luster tile that was imported to Susa, Tunis, in the ninth century (Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, II, pl. 86A, no. 17):



A more elaborate version, also from Iraq, is illustrated in *Excavations at Samarra, 1936-1939*, I, pl. LXV, lower cut:



In another version, on a luster bowl of the late tenth or early eleventh century found in Fustat (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 23A) the foliate form is more pronounced:



With only a little change in the components, the form loses its foliate character and resembles a bird's head, as can be seen on a related Nishapur polychrome on white bowl in the Teheran museum (Pope, *Masterpieces of Persian Art*, pl. 44, bottom; the assignment to the Metropolitan Museum is erroneous):



A distinctive and well-designed filling was evolved at Merv in the twelfth century which is more subtly ambiguous, or rather decoratively attractive, but not clear.



The rosettes on the walls of 22 consist of a central black dot and ring of white dots on a reddish disk, enclosed within a ring of large overlapping black spots. Related rosettes occur in the pottery of Gurgan (Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, X, p. 11, fig. 7) and in Amul (a bowl in the Metropolitan, 24.147.2), although in this pottery they are usually placed on stalks, like flowers.

The design on the bottom of 22 consists of a white square, whose corners extend onto the walls. Filling the square are five rosettes, differing from those on the walls in that they have dull green centers. Between these rosettes are pear-shaped motifs with black grounds, each ornamented with a curled line scratched through to the white engobe. This decoration is not unrelated to the ambiguous motif in the pear shapes on the wall. A more elaborate version of this scratched curl occurs on 3.

23 JAR FRAGMENT

H 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.481

Reddish clay. Engobe applied so thinly that on the interior (not illustrated) the undecorated white surface is streaked with brown where the body shows through. The circle at the right is brownish red; the dark, curving band, containing a line of white spots, is purplish black. To the left of the band is a vertical tubular lug; the jar, which had vertical sides, originally had two such lugs. Painted on the lug in a speckly green is a cable pattern. The small compartments between the circle and the curving band are filled with a linear pattern in the same green, which contains chrome and stains the glaze a clear yellow. A unique piece, imported.

24 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 16 cm ; Village Tepe
Divided between MMA (study piece) and MIB

Reddish clay, thinly turned. Decoration: a horse and a bird in bright red slip, outlined in purplish black. The linear pattern filling the background, similar in style to that in the compartments of 23, is painted in raw sienna and stains the glaze locally a clear yellow. The curl on the right, found on only one other piece, 28, is to be seen on bowls decorated with birds made in Afrasiyab (May-suradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. xxii). A unique piece, imported.

25 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 10 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.506

Well-leigated, reddish, unusually smooth clay. The base, which is flat and not glazed, has an almost polished surface. Decoration: a bird in purplish black, the outlined, dotted areas surrounding it painted in a dark raw sienna that yellows the glaze locally. An import.

26 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 17.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.490

Reddish body. Thinly turned, with cleanly cut foot-ring. Base is covered with engobe but is not glazed. The exterior is decorated with a band of cable design similar to that of 20 except that the strokes are narrower in the shank and broader at the ends. The decoration on the interior includes a repetitive "inscription" around the wall in the style of 19. The inscription, painted beneath a colorless glaze, is a vivid tomato red outlined in a black that, where thin, is a cool brown. A horizontal line of spots in white slip adorns the letters; the spaces between them contain a thin line with a black "bead" (for comment on this, see

19). Beneath the inscription is a broad band of black, made to resemble a succession of leaves by means of scratched white lines. The bottom is filled with a conventional flower and leaves in red and black, the flower adorned with black spots and surrounded by dots of white slip. Just above the bottom of the bowl and at the rim are rows of black spots. Found in a location that was still active in the early eleventh century.

A fragment in the Teheran museum with wall decoration similar to that of 26 has, just above the bottom, an interlaced band with angular intersections. In other versions of this bowl, flowers and leaves, like those on the bottom of 26, take the place of the band of lettering around the wall.

27 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 11.2 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.615

Related in design to 20, with the exterior showing the identical cable design. The main decoration consists of letters in black, their bases toward the rim, separated by scratched lines. Between each pair of verticals an ornamental thin line is introduced for contrast. Around the rim, swags of purplish brown with superimposed white dots enclose vertical strokes of purplish brown. Filling the spaces between the swags are greenish curls contained within an orange outline.

A complete bowl like 27, obviously from the same factory, appeared on the market after 1942. Its bottom is decorated with a red and green bird and three circular green spots, and its exterior has the same cable decoration.

28 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 12 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 40.170.476

In shape like 20. Glaze has a warm yellow cast. The black is purplish. On the wall, enclosed within an interlacing white-dotted black band, is a bright red rosette bordered by black spots with short radial lines between them (the pigment ran during the firing). The rosette has a center of a superimposed black spot surrounded by dots of white slip. A similar design fills the bottom of 29. For a similar version of these rosettes, see 3. Rosettes with dots rather than lines between the bordering spots occur on a polychrome on white bowl, reputedly from Nishapur, in the British Museum (Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, November, 1961, p. 110, fig. 14). Elsewhere on 28, contained within black bands, is a large curl, black on red. Such curls are a feature of Afrasiyab (further information on this point at 24). Filling some of the doubly outlined areas between the interlacing bands are curl and dot designs in a greenish yellow pigment that stains the clear glaze yellow. An import.

29 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 17 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.626

Smooth red clay. The cavity of the base, which has a foot ring, is covered with engobe, but the glaze (now disintegrated) descends only about three-quarters of the distance between the rim and foot. Decorating the bottom is an elaborate rosette in green slip with a red center. For comment on this motif, see 28. A red band, bordered in black and adorned with a line of spots in white slip, encircles the bottom; a second such band encircles the wall beneath the customary rim border of black spots (their color now lost). Between these bands appears an inscription in black, its base toward the rim. It does not seem to be repetitive, in contrast to those of 26, 27, 30, and others, and the end of one word and beginning of another have been preserved. The rarity of this type of lettering in Nishapur as well as the smoothness of the clay suggest that the piece was imported.

30 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 12 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

The exterior of this piece has the same cable pattern that appears on 20, 22, 26, and 27. The principal decoration on the interior consists of an inscription in black, in the manner of 19, with the letters defined by lines scratched through to the white engobe. The letters appear on a red ground.

The motif in the register below the inscription is colored olive green. At the rim, contained within swags of red and black, is a motif in black resembling two upside-down L's thickened almost to triangles and placed back to back (see also 50). Perhaps made in Nishapur; otherwise made either in Khurasan or Transoxiana. For a bowl with similar rim decoration, see Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 19B, or Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 559 B. The double-L motif was not confined to Khurasan or Transoxiana, however, or even to the polychrome on white ware, since it appears on an opaque white ware bowl found in Nishapur but presumably made in Iraq (Group 6, 1) as well as on an opaque white ware bowl found in Susa (Koechlin, *Les Céramiques*, pl. XII, no. 84).

31 BOWL

D 20, H 13.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

At the rim, a band of grayish green between two red lines. Beneath this, in black, an inscription, with base toward the rim, consisting of the words *al yumn* (happiness) with two letters added for symmetry (compare 13, 17). Alternating with the inscription is a development of the simple ring to be seen on 17.

32 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 13.7 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.467

Unusual greenish glaze. On the exterior, which is undecorated, the glaze, extending only a little way over the rim, is yellow, probably because the bowl was fired near one whose glaze contained chrome. Decoration: a band of pseudo inscription resembling Kufic. This is in black, dulled in the firing. Above and below, bands of red. A black band on the rim.

33 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 14.2 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.557

The border decoration, carelessly painted in purplish black, consists of vertical strokes traversed by a "beaded" center line and linked by a base line. Beneath this is a motif in orange red, consisting of two opposed curls and some short strokes descending from a base line. The symmetrical reversal of this motif seems to be an imitation of certain textiles in which such a treatment is common. An unusual piece.

34 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 5.3 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.558

Yellowish buff clay. The leafy decoration in vivid red was applied before the inscription, since in some places the black of the inscription is superimposed on it. The white lines separating the letters and defining the leaves were scratched with a point. Not typical of Nishapur.

35 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 9.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.552

Reddish clay. Glaze faintly green. Decoration: an inscription in vivid red with added strokes in black. No other example was found of such lettering in this ware. A similar effect of added lines projecting from the tops of the letters occurs in the black on white ware (Group 3, 36).

36 DISH

D 13.5, H 4.2 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.163

Yellowish buff clay. Flat base, covered with both engobe and glaze, as is the exterior. The exterior is undecorated. Interior: the simulated writing, in four short bands around the rim and one on the bottom, is in black on red. The spaces between the "letters" are filled with a vinelike design of great delicacy. A variation of this writing, painted

as a single radial band extending from the edge of the bottom almost to the rim, occurs on another Nishapur bowl in the Metropolitan (40.170.616). In the museum of Tashkent is a dish with a narrow band of similar writing extending across it from rim to rim. The introduction into inscriptions of vinelike decoration is paralleled in inscriptions in early eleventh-century textiles of Egypt (Kühnel, *Islamische Stoffe*, pl. 7; N. P. Britton, *A Study of Some Early Islamic Textiles in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, Boston, 1938, fig. 50).

37 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 4.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.553

Buff clay, brilliant white engobe, colorless glaze. Exterior has traces of a red and black decoration, apparently consisting of vertical black strokes and horizontal curls in red. On the interior wall, decoration consists of black-pupiled peacock eyes in black-dotted compartments with vivid red outlines. A piece of outstanding quality. In the period since 1942 the Teheran museum has acquired a cup from Nishapur decorated like 37. Similar in style is a bowl from Afrasiyab in the British Museum; in addition to black and red it has yellow green spots. In view of the rarity of such pieces in Nishapur, they were possibly imported. However, the attribution of such first-rate pottery entirely to Afrasiyab has by no means been confirmed.

38 FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 4.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.559

The motif is a trefoil in reserve. Delicate outlines in red, not visible in the illustration, were drawn first and then filled in with black. Where thick, this is an intense black, where thin, it is yellowish. The trefoil contains pale decorative strokes and dots of red.

Neither the form of the trefoil nor its added strokes were duplicated in other ceramic finds of Nishapur. The decorative strokes occur, however, in the fine polychrome on white ware made in Afrasiyab; 38 was doubtless imported from there. Found in the same cellar as 39.

39 FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 7.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.471

Smooth red clay. Base, which has a foot ring, is covered with engobe but is not glazed. Decoration: two lines of miniature simulated Kufic, the shorter in red, the longer in black. Found in the same cellar as 38. Found elsewhere in the excavations was a fragment of a large bowl that had similar "writing" encircling the rim. Comparable "writing" occurs in the black on white ware (Group 3, 41) and in the ware decorated with yellow-staining black (Group

8, 32). In the Staatliche Museen, Berlin, is a small polychrome on white bowl on which this script, extending from rim to rim, is doubled for a short distance on the bottom and at either end.

40 a,b,c BOWL FRAGMENTS

W of 40c 5.5. cm ; various provenances
40a, b MIB
40c MMA 40.170.560

Examples of miniature simulated Kufic, drawn in purplish black and red. The script on 40b is a diminutive form of that seen on 19 and other vessels. The script on the other fragments, even further removed from true writing, resembles that on 32. Compare Group 3, 41, 50.

41 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 16.2 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

The chief element of the decoration is a carefully drawn inscription in intense black, its base toward the rim, consisting of the word *barakeh* (blessing). A point was used to scratch the white lines that make the elements of the *kaf* seem to interlace. On the bottom of the bowl, a design of looped half-palmettes, again with scratched lines. On the wall, a black-dotted area outlined in vivid red with two large red spots. Probably an import. Closely related writing occurs on a bowl from Afrasiyab (Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 560 A), while the decoration on the bottom is a feature on a bowl excavated at Afrasiyab by Stoliarov (Stoliarov Photograph 4, row A, no. 9, page 367). Bowls said to have been found at Nishapur since 1942 have a similar decoration on the bottom with a decoration on the wall consisting of pear shapes enclosed in half-palmettes. In bowls in the Tashkent Museum an ornament based on calligraphy like that of 41, with interlacings suggested by scratching, was adapted to form enclosing panels on the walls (Cohn-Wiener Photograph 3, page 365). The panels are formed by two parallel rings, one immediately below the saw-tooth border at the rim, the other immediately above the bottom; the rings are connected by two looped verticals.

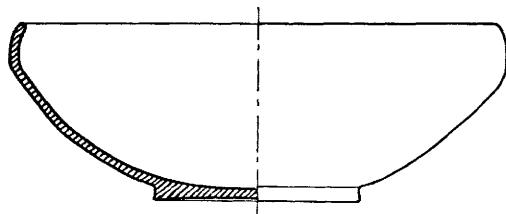
42 FRAGMENT (bottom)

D 14 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.487

Reddish clay. The base, covered with engobe, is unglazed. Stilt marks visible on bottom. Decoration: eight lines with finials radiating from the central spot; the spot and four of the finials in black, the lines and alternate finials in red. No other piece thus decorated was found in Nishapur. It is perhaps related to a design that appears in Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 244, fig. 15).

43 BOWL

D 19, H 9.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 38.40.286



1:3

Sides flare widely, rim is slightly incurved, base almost flat. Exterior undecorated. The color scheme of this bowl and of 45, 46, and 47—all of a distinctive type—makes extensive use of olive green slip outlined in black. On the wall, in reserve, is an inscription, its base toward the center of the bowl. The band of lettering is probably derived from the word *yumn* (happiness), repeated. The small black spots added in the letters have no epigraphical meaning. Such added dots are also a feature of the Nishapur buff ware (Group 1, 63, among others). The central motif of 43, a circle with two leaflike projections enclosing a disk with a V in reserve, is in black and olive green. The circular spots, one above and one below, are in red.

44 THREE-HANDLED PITCHER (base missing)

H 20, D 15 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Pitchers and jars of this ware, all of them having a reddish body, were apparently rare. Both the exterior and the interior of 44 are glazed. The loosely drawn, rather formless decoration, reminiscent of 27 and 28, is in sage green, earth red, and a brownish black. Containing chrome, the black has stained the glaze yellow. A fragment of a similar vessel in the Metropolitan (40.170.620), found in the Qanat Tepe, has large half-palmettes on the shoulder.

45 a,b DISH

D 13.8, H 4.3 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

The sides flare out straightly, and the rim does not turn in. The same color scheme as 43, including some red details in the center motif. On the wall is a simplified "inscription" in reserve, its base toward the center of the bowl, with decorative dots added. In the center of the bottom, a design composed of indefinite leaflike forms. Undoubtedly from the same factory as 43.

46 DISH

D 12, H 3.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Decoration: a large bird with outstretched wings. The

spots around the rim and the outlines of the design are black. The bird's wings and feet are red, the rest of the color is olive green. The representation of a bird's wings detached from its body, as here, was practiced not only in Nishapur but in Afrasiyab and the region of Sari. Of the small group of pieces also represented by 43, 45, and 47, only this one was found decorated with a bird.

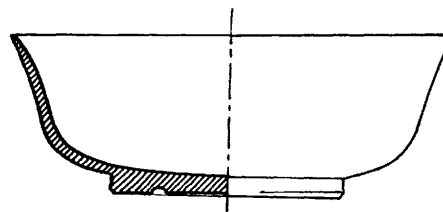
47 PLATE FRAGMENT

W 17.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.468

Reddish clay. The glaze on the exterior somewhat yellow, doubtless from the plate's having been placed close to a chrome-painted piece in the kiln. On the interior, as in 43 and 45, a pseudo inscription in reserve fills an encircling band. The outlines, drawn in a black that contains chrome, have stained the glaze locally a clear yellow, as on 44. The tops of some of the letters are deeply divided into three. The colored areas between the letters are green, in some cases overlapping the outline. The broad band beneath the inscription is red. The pear-shaped forms between the letters contain a stem headed by three-dotted circles in reserve.

48 BOWL

D 17.5, H 6.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.23
(Color Plate 6, page xvii)



1:3

Very smooth red clay. Thick base with small groove, semi-circular in section. Walls slightly concave. All these features are uncommon in Nishapur and also in Afrasiyab, so the place of manufacture is not certain. Exterior decoration: ornamental circles alternating with groups of vertical strokes—a treatment not unknown in Nishapur buff ware. The interior decoration features a warrior holding a straight-bladed sword in his right hand, a round shield in his left. The inside of the shield is shown, with the figure grasping its handle. A fragment of a buff ware bowl in Berlin has a horseman grasping a shield in his right hand, depicted in the same fashion (Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, X, p. 11, fig. 12). The off-white engobe of 48 has been largely covered with black, with reserved areas surrounding the ornaments: a rosette placed above the warrior's helmet or cap, two rosettes with projecting forms placed above his arms, and two large units of foliated simulated Kufic filling the spaces beneath his arms. The palmette ornamenting the warrior's skirt is a common type, inher-

ited from the Sasanian period, when it was used either singly or in clusters of four, the points at the center (Herzfeld, *Iran in the Ancient East*, p. 339, fig. 421). This palmette continued to appear through the twelfth century (N. A. Reath & E. B. Sachs, *Persian Textiles*, New Haven, 1937, pl. 48).

Although it is doubtful that a palmette of this size ever appeared on an actual garment, the ornament itself is found on a silk textile of the seventh or eighth century (A. Godard, *L'Art de l'Iran*, Paris, 1962, pl. III, p. 252). The strong black V that projects to the rim of the bowl on either side of the warrior's head increases the dramatic impact of the figure and at the same time balances the flare of the skirt. The significance of the V is not known. The elevated points on helmets seen on a post-Sasanian silver dish (Smirnov, *Argenterie orientale*, pl. XXIII, no. 50) may conceivably be related, but this is quite hypothetical. The figures on two bowls in private collections also have such projections from their headgear. One of these figures, an archer, wears a knobbed helmet or cap like that on 48. The other (*Sept mille ans d'art en Iran* Exhibition Catalogue, no. 944) is shown dancing. Here the projections seem to be part of the figure's head scarf, which ends in points below the knees but is not bifurcated as the scarves of the buff ware figures usually are (Group 1, 59). In this instance, a disk and a crescent are placed between the two points above the head. A buff ware bowl, entirely different in style from 48 and the two bowls just cited, has a figure with comparable black lines continuing above its head (Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, X, p. 11, fig. 11). However, it is doubtful that the bowl came from Nishapur, and perhaps it is not even authentic.

49 BOWL

Original D 23, H 15.4 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MIB

The right side of this piece is illustrated; the left side is damaged and incomplete. Around the top, serving as a rim decoration, is a pseudo-Kufic inscription in black, perhaps based on the word *barakeh* (blessing). Beneath this, a band of circles filled with yellow, green, and earth red in sequence. The center band is filled with sharp-pointed palmettes, alternately upright and inverted, connected by S-curves; the palmettes are colored yellow, with clear green around them and a touch of light red at each side of their bases. At the bottom, a band of horizontal chevrons. The spaces between the V's are colored in the same way as the band of circles. The interior, covered with engobe and glaze, is undecorated.

50 PLATTER

D 30, H 7 cm ; Village Tepe

MIB

Red body, white engobe. Base has a foot ring. A slight

vertical collar separates the bottom from the flaring wall. Decoration in brown black, sienna yellow, and gray green. The prominence of the swags at the rim and the use of circles filled with loosely drawn foliate forms indicates Transoxiana as the probable place of origin for this exceptional piece. The pairs of triangular shapes within the swags are a version of the double L-shapes found on 30, where there is further comment.

51 BOWL

D 21.5, H 8.4 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MIB

Pinkish body. Walls flare straight out. Design entirely in purplish black. One of a small group of bowls with a characteristic decoration of broad radial bands extending to the rim. Other examples, 52-55, have the added colors that 51 lacks. The bands of 51, enclosing a small square at the center, are adorned with a cable motif. The design of the radial bands, giving the effect of rotation, was apparently very popular at the end of the tenth century and in the eleventh. It appears to have had a vogue not only in Nishapur but in Transoxiana (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. XII, top), Afghanistan (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, pl. XVIII, nos. 242-247), and Gurgan (Metropolitan Museum, sherd collection). Though it is not impossible that 51 and the related bowls were imported, it is just as likely that these not very elegant pieces were made both in Afrasiyab and Nishapur. For the use of this design in the slip-painted ware with colored engobe, see Group 5, 23.

52 a,b BOWL

D 19.5, H 8.4 cm ; Vineyard Tepe

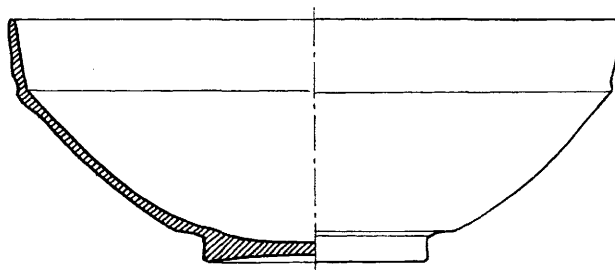
MIB

The wall flares, but, unlike that of 51, it has a nearly vertical rim, the change of direction being marked by a projecting ridge. The decoration of three radial bands is drawn in ordinary black. A whirling effect, somewhat different from that on 51, is achieved with added bands that fit the spaces between the radii that meet in the center. The method seems related to a form of underglaze decoration of the twelfth century found at Kish, near Babylon (Reitlinger, *Ars Islamica*, II, fig. 17B). It is possible (as Reitlinger suggests) that this is an instance of artistic influence from Khurasan. However, the decorative idea is so basic that the type at Kish may merely be a parallel. Or it may be another indication of the unity that resulted from the founding of the Seljuq empire.

The cable motif within the bands of 52 is drawn in a black that stained the glaze yellow. For this reason the piece may be considered a link between this particular group of polychrome on white ware and the ware decorated with yellow-staining black (Group 8). The exterior is undecorated.

53 BOWL (restored)

D 24.2, H 9.5 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 39.40.12



1:3

Red body, greenish glaze. The exterior wall is a little chattered, probably not intentional.

The vertical rim, rising from the same exterior ridge seen on 52, is decorated on the exterior with purplish black circles containing vertical strokes. On the interior the outlines of the radial bands and the strongly contrasting motif of curls that fills the triangular spaces near the rim are purplish black; the cable motif within the bands is brown; the circumscribing ring just beneath the rim is earth red.

54 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 23 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 36.20.2

Red body. Just above the base is a small groove. The rim rises from a sharply marked ridge like those of 52 and 53, then turns slightly inward. The exterior is covered with engobe but glazed only at the rim, which is decorated with a series of slightly slanting black lines. The decoration of the interior, drawn in black, consists of interlacing bands in the manner of 51 and a deep border of pseudo writing. Red and yellow streaks have been added in the bands and touches of yellow and green in the "inscription."

55 a,b BOWL

D 15.2, H 6 cm ; near Vineyard Tepe
MMA 38.40.179

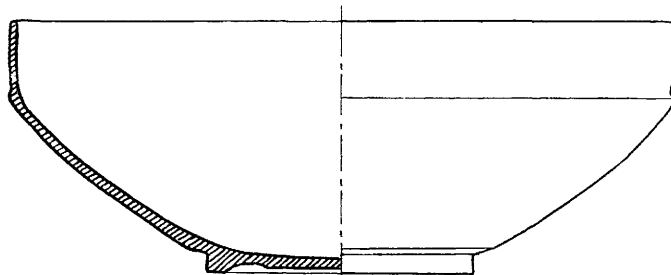
Red body. Base slightly concave. Rim turns up, but without a ridge on the exterior. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is undecorated. Interior decoration: broad radial bands in black with curls, alternately red and black, in the triangles around the rim. Streaks of yellow and green appear in the bands and adjacent spaces.

For a closely related bowl with upturned rim and a ridge on the exterior, undoubtedly from Nishapur—not Samarkand, as published—see Jakobsen, *Islamische Keramik* Exhibition Catalogue, figs. 6, 7. For another related piece, the lines of whose bands are double, with added double center lines running from the bottom to the rim, see Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 21A. This doubling of the lines,

which does not appear on any such bowls found in Nishapur, occurs on a bowl found in Afrasiyab (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. XII, top), where a similar decoration without doubling of the lines was also used (Pézar, *Céramique*, pl. xcvi, lower right). Another version of the same "woven" pattern is to be seen in Stoliarov Photograph 3, row E, nos. 12, 17 (page 367).

56 BOWL

D 26, H 10.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.147



1:3

Buff clay. Base, having a wide groove, is covered with engobe but not with glaze. Rim rises vertically from a sharply marked ridge, as on 52–54. Exterior decorated with a series of black slanting strokes with touches of green and yellow alternating between them. Interior decoration, drawn in black, consists of a central rosette and a deep band of pseudo inscription around the rim in the manner of 54. The central disk of the rosette is yellowish olive, the surrounding disk bright green. A broad streak of clear, slightly greenish yellow has been added in the space between the rosette and the rim decoration. The looped projections on the outline of the rosette seem to be a feature of some pottery of Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 234, fig. 9, upper).

A bowl in the Metropolitan (66.176), in all likelihood from Nishapur, shows a warrior similar to that on 48, carrying a shield shaped like the central rosette of 56—a clear instance of a decorative, rather than an actual, representation of an object.

57 BOWL

D 15, H 5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.233

Reddish clay. Delicately curved, this silhouette is rare in the glazed earthenware of Nishapur. The base, flat, is covered with engobe. Exterior: undecorated. Scattered on the bottom are repeated small motifs: spots of black, petals colored black and yellow, *alef*-like shapes colored red. Around the rim, above a band of black, is a decoration consisting of groups of triple vertical strokes of black alternating with rectangular spaces colored either yellow or

red. A similar rim decoration, with groups of five vertical strokes, occurs on a buff ware bowl (Group 1, 91). The use of scattered small motifs on the bottom alone is most unusual in Nishapur pottery and, together with the shape of the bowl, suggests an import.

58 BOWL

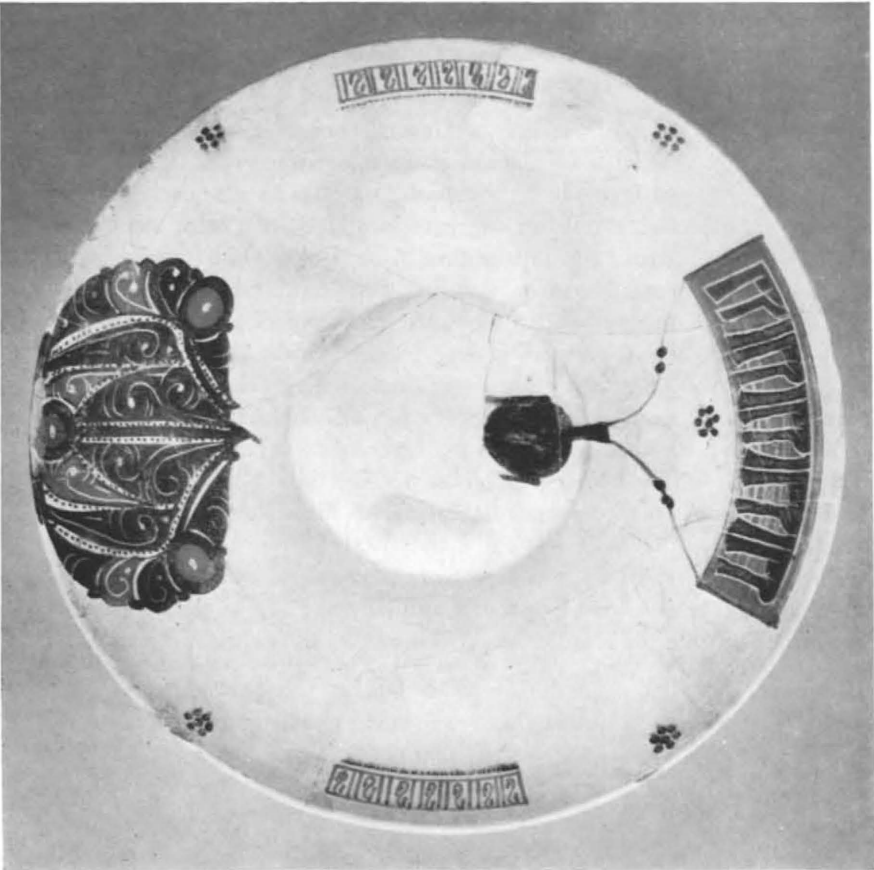
D 19.5, H 8 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

The rosette on the bottom, with its group of looped projections, is like that of 56, as is the color scheme, even to the streak of clear greenish yellow on the wall. In light of this, the two bowls are probably from the same factory. In the band near the rim, a series of large circles, each with a central stroke. At the rim, a stroke of color broken at long intervals by a group of four vertical strokes of black. The exterior is decorated at the rim by a series of vertical black strokes.

59 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 15.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.458

Smooth red clay, similar to, though less smooth than, 48. As with 48, place of manufacture uncertain. Base, covered with engobe but not with glaze, has a wide bevel. Traces of decoration on the exterior: blobs of green, thick black strokes, groups of thin black strokes. The interior is decorated with a standing man, arms akimbo, the hands touched with yellow. He wears a black jacket with prominent pointed lapels, touched with yellow and green. These are a feature of dress in Central Asia, as we know from wall paintings (Le Coq, *Chotscho*, pl. 7A) and from a silver dish (Smirnov, *Argenterie orientale*, pl. xx, no. 46). The man appears to be wearing tight-fitting trousers. Two pointed shapes hang beneath his belt. Although they do not hang vertically, they perhaps represent leather dangles, such as were worn in the ninth and tenth centuries and were found in a wall painting of a horseman in Nishapur (Hauser & Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, April, 1942, p. 118, fig. 45).



3

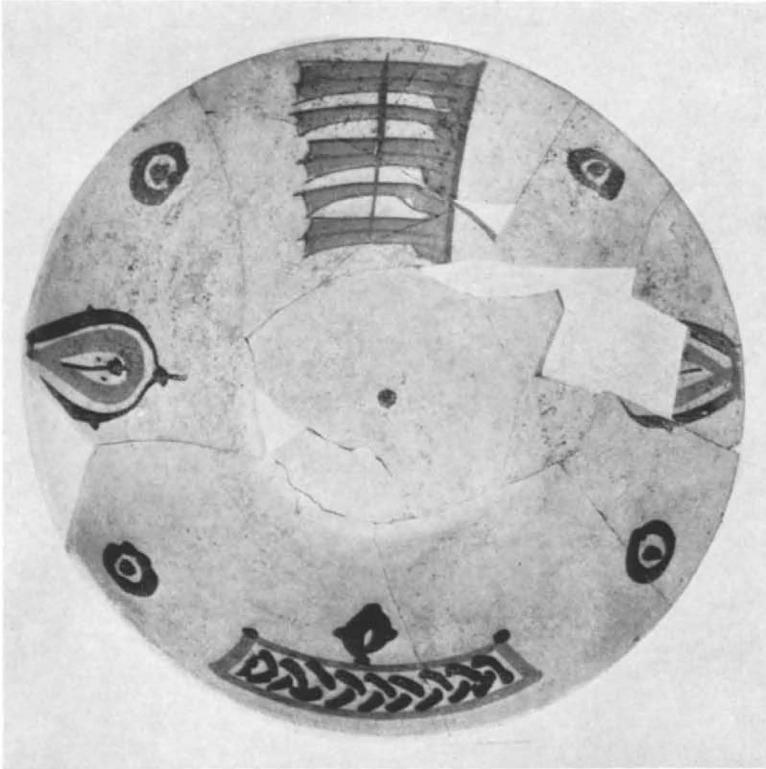


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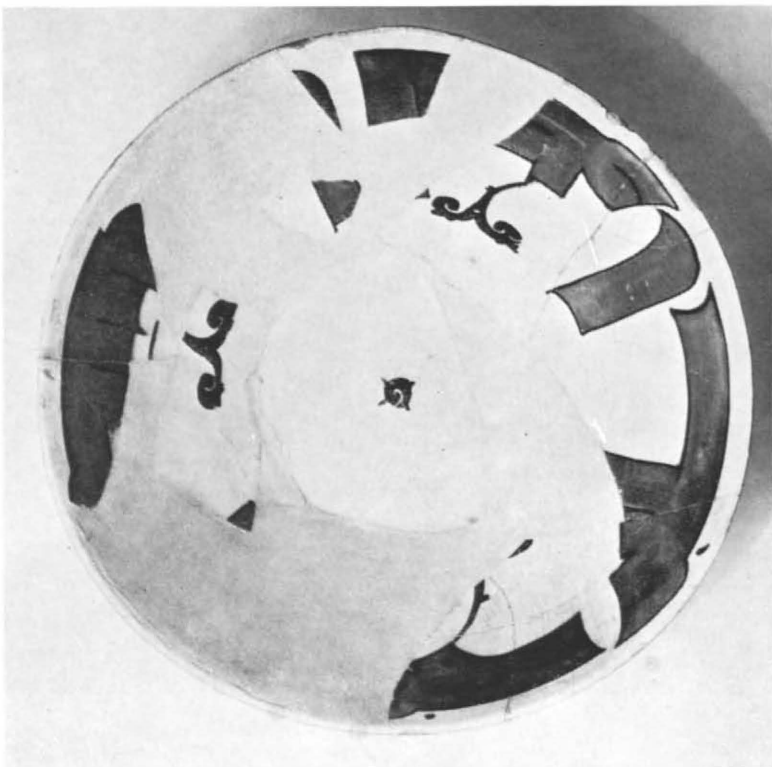
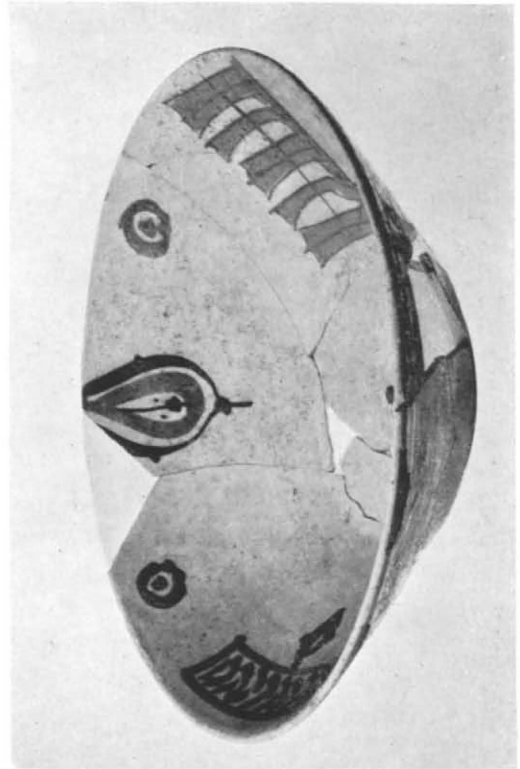


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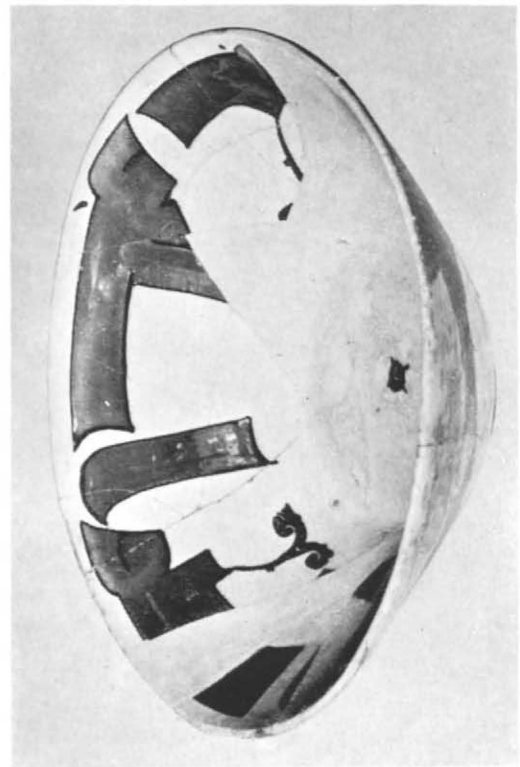
5a



5b



4a

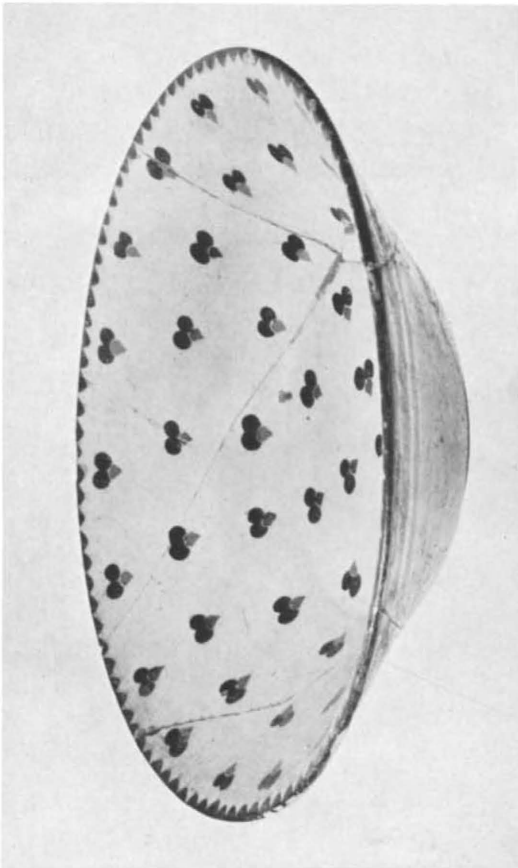
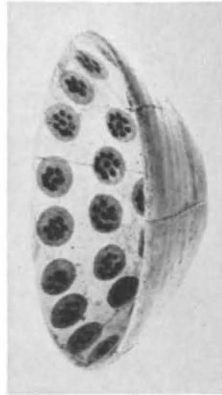


4b

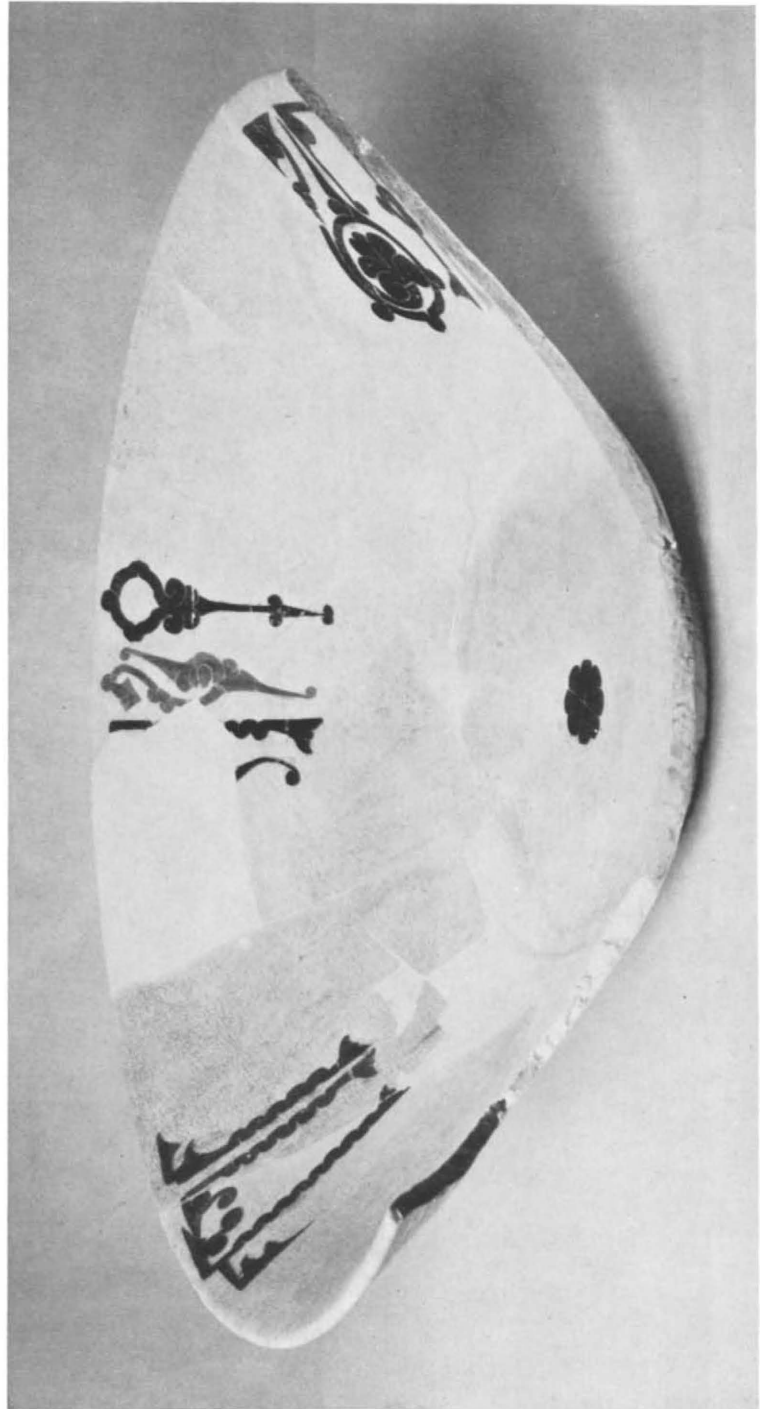
7



8



9



6

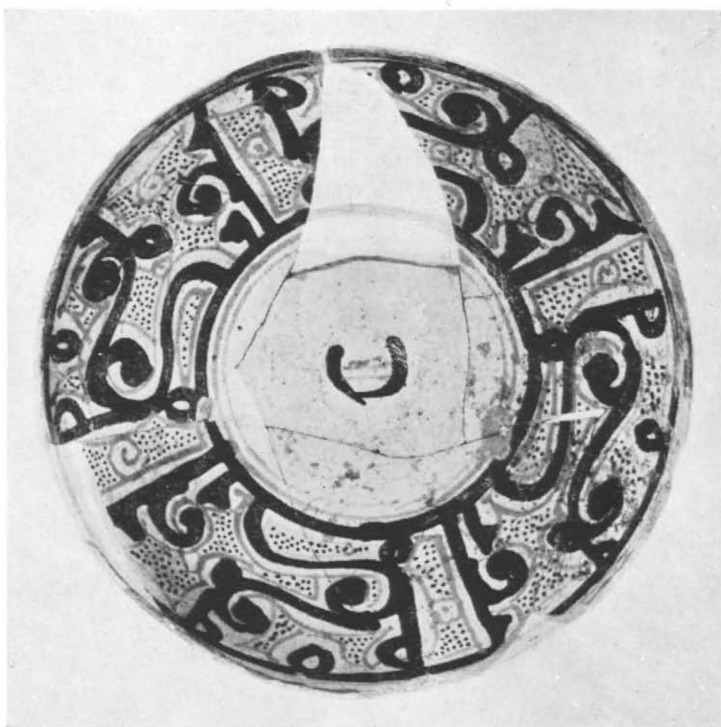
11a



11b



10a



10b

13



12



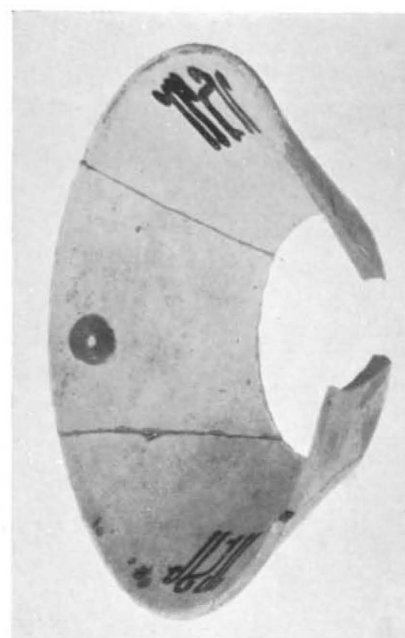
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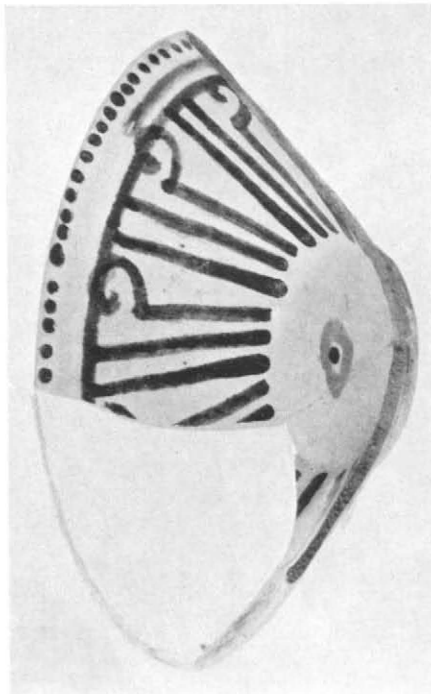


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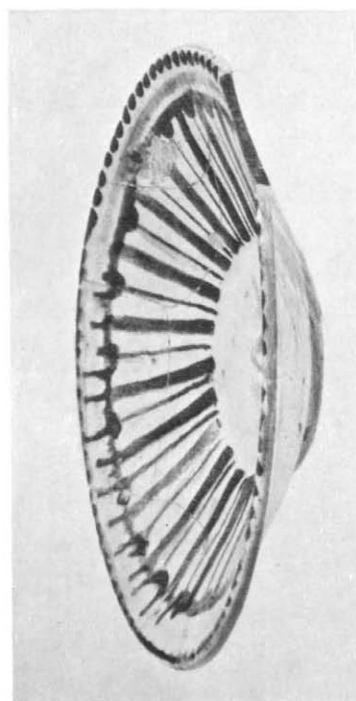
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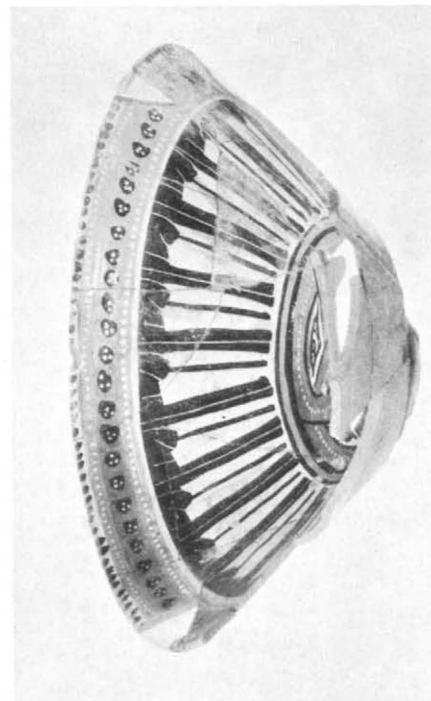
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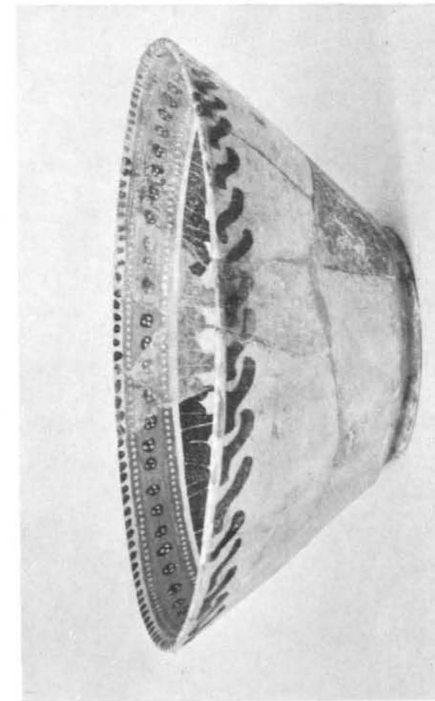
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18



20a

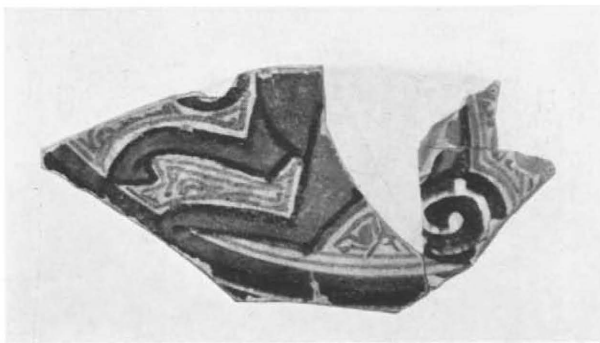


20b

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24



25



26



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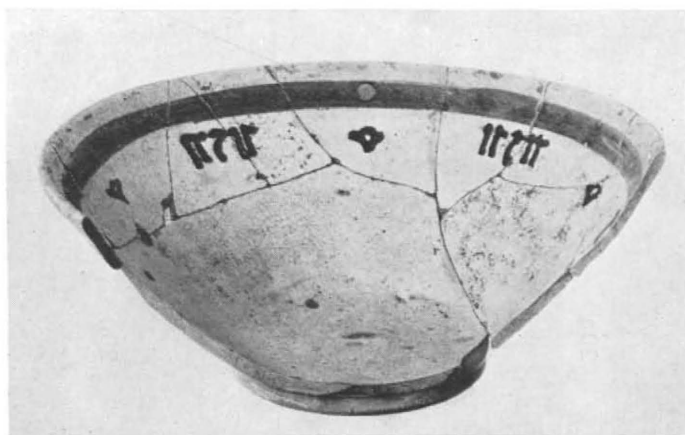
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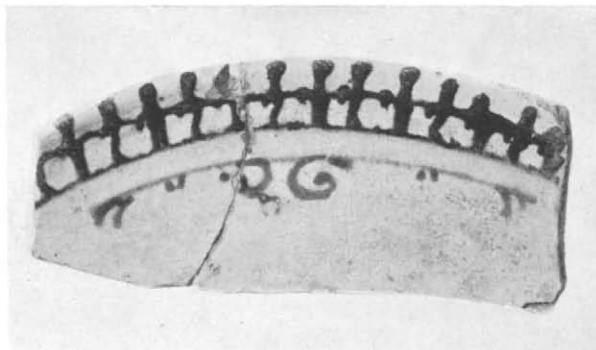
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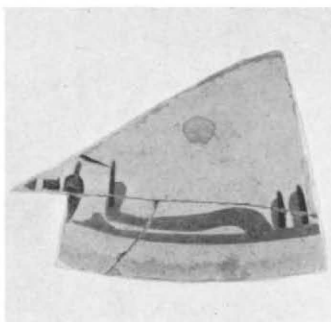
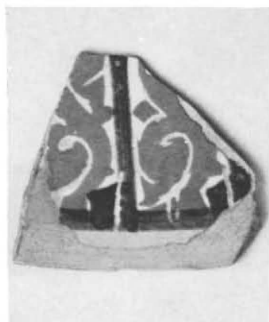
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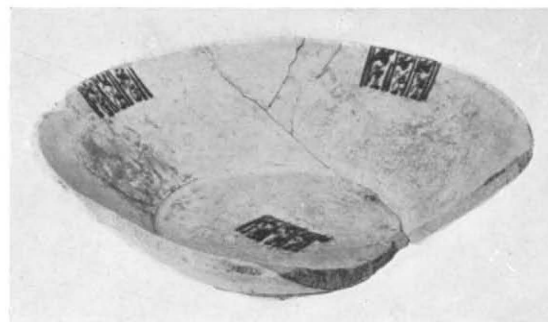
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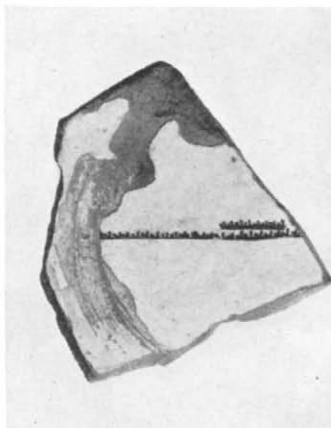
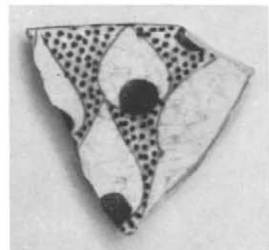
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35, 36



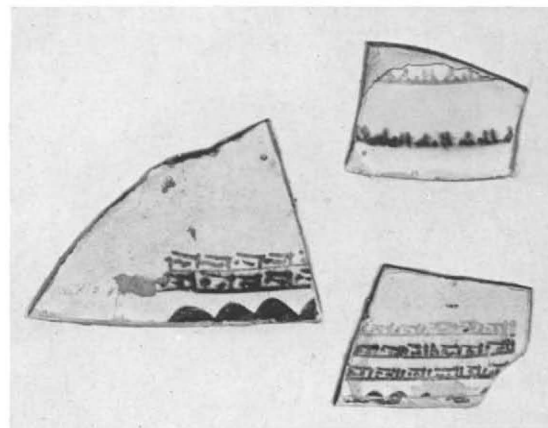
37



40a

40b

40c



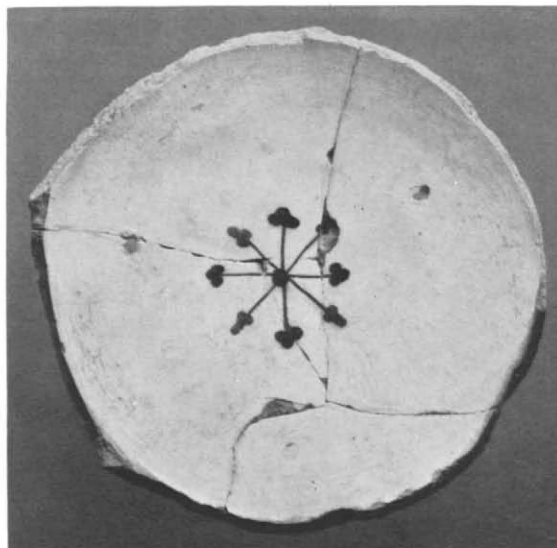
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41



42



43



44



45a



46



45b



47



48



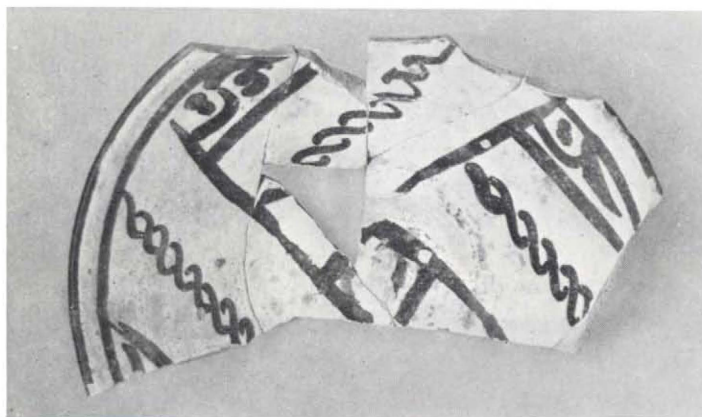
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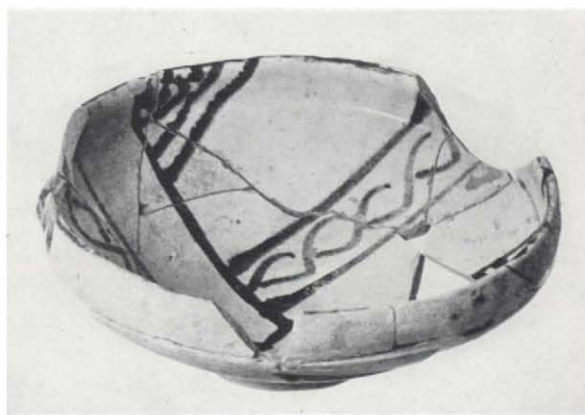
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51



52a



53



52b



54



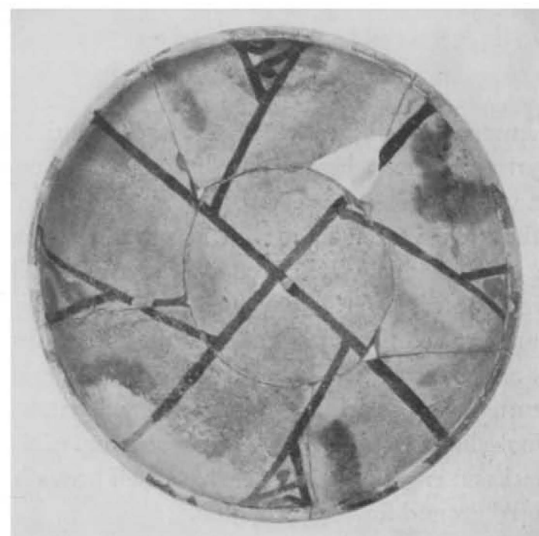
55a



56



55b



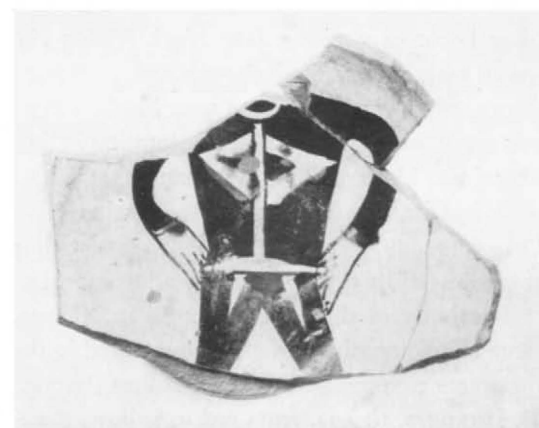
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57



59



5

Slip-painted Ware with Colored Engobe

Inasmuch as the potters of eastern Iran and Transoxiana practiced the technique of painting in black and color on a white engobe, it was a natural step for them to reverse the scheme and paint in white or other light-hued slips on a colored engobe. These engobes are principally an earth red (Color Plate 7, page xviii) that fired a light brown under a colorless glaze and a purplish black that turned a warm dark brown beneath the glaze. The latter often turned very dark indeed, and when not examined closely, looks like a warm black. A small subgroup of these vessels lacks an engobe, the clay surface itself providing the colored ground for the decoration.

The engobes contain metal oxides that often affect the glazes above them, whether the glazes are themselves colored yellow or green or are nearly colorless, which last is more often the case. The staining of the glaze by the engobe is particularly noticeable at the edges of white areas; it is commoner on vessels covered with a purplish black engobe, which contains manganese, than on those covered with an earth red. When a colored glaze is applied over white slip painting, the color can be seen for what it is, the white acting as a reflector. When a colored glaze covers a colored engobe, on the other hand, the final color is a modified one. A purplish black engobe under a green glaze becomes almost a true black (Color Plate 7, page xviii), whereas a reddish engobe under a green glaze produces only a warm, pleasant near black. Some of the vessels found in Nishapur have a decoration in light green on a purplish black ground (5–9), an effect achieved by the use of white slip painting and somewhat greenish glaze. Others (37, 38) have a strong, full green, with the engobe, regardless of its original color, made almost black.

The body of the ware as found in Nishapur has the same characteristics and variations noted in the bodies of the wares covered with white engobes (Groups 3, 4, and 8). It ranges, that is, from red to yellow, that of most of the pieces being reddish.

In the application of the glaze there is some difference between the present ware and those with white engobes. In the latter it is rare for the glaze not to cover the entire exterior surface including the base, whereas in the present ware an incomplete glazing of the exterior wall is often seen, and the base is rarely glazed.

The technique of painting in slip on a colored engobe was employed on vessels of many shapes and sizes, ranging from pieces of toylike smallness to bowls of considerable size—though none of the latter, it might be noted, reached the size of the largest black on white bowls.

The similarity of the materials and technique to those of the black on white and polychrome on white wares reinforces a relationship that is indicated by the similarity of certain of the designs. Examples of the present ware and the others sometimes resemble one another in the manner of black on white and white on black. For example, compare 3 in the present ware with 59 in Group 3, 42 and 47 with 26 in Group 3, and 38, 39, and 46 with 6 in Group 4. There are also a few minor designs that are related to some in the ware decorated with yellow-staining black. With these similarities noted, it may be said that the majority of the designs in the present ware are distinctive.

The simplest decoration consists of white dots or spots in clusters, mostly of three or four, with perhaps a line of single spots at the rim. Such patterns are common on small dishes covered either with a light red or a near-black engobe. It is definite that such pieces were made in Nishapur, since both a "second" (13) and a waster (43) so decorated were found.

Another simple decoration favored in this ware is a rosette consisting basically of a large disk surrounded by a ring of circular spots. Widely known for millennia, such rosettes have continued to the present day in the pottery of Samarkand.

In the ninth and tenth centuries the potters of Nisha-

pur and Afrasiyab employed considerable invention in varying the motif both in form and color. They changed the size of the spots in the encircling ring and occasionally painted two rings of spots. They also elaborated the central disk, placing a group of spots upon it—white, yellow, or green. In Nishapur such rosettes appear on large bowls (1) as well as on small dishes (16, 18), usually as the sole ornament, though on some dishes supplemented by a trifoliate form (17) or other simple motif. On somewhat similar bowls of Afrasiyab such rosettes are accompanied by motifs of a different nature drawn in white lines, motifs that become the dominant element of the design (Stoliarov Photograph 2, row A, no. 11, page 366; Erdmann, *Faenza*, XXV, pl. xxiv b,c) and sometimes suggest birds (ibid., pl. xxiv d; Pugachenkova & Rempel, *History of Art of Uzbekistan*, fig. 230). No vessels resembling these were found in Nishapur, a fact indicating that the importation of this ware from Afrasiyab was selective.

A common feature in this ware with red engobe as found in Nishapur is a geometrical form composed of narrow bands of black with superimposed white dots. This may be a rosette (19), swastika (20), quadrilateral shape (22), or lattice (50). Used in a much freer style, such dotted bands may represent three-leaved foliate forms and birds (32, 48). Of these nongeometrical decorations painted in black with added white spots, only scraps were found by the Metropolitan's expedition. Several complete vessels with this type of decoration have come to light since 1940, reputedly from Nishapur. Two, once in the Matossian collection and unpublished, have crudely drawn animals painted in a near black on a light red engobe. Their bodies, covered with white spots, are outlined with dotted bands. A bowl in the Ettinghausen collection, unpublished, is decorated with a running animal with a leaflike tail, painted in black and covered with rows of white spots. That a similar treatment was used in Afrasiyab is evident in a fragmentary bowl with dark engobe from that center, on which the body of a bird, drawn in outline, is adorned with rows of white spots. A ewer with black engobe, also decorated with a bird, from Iran, most probably from Nishapur, is in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (65.1283).

Script of various kinds plays a prominent part in the decoration of this ware as found in Nishapur. Occasionally there is evidence of a calligraphic hand of the highest quality (42, 47), but in general it may be said that the artistry revealed in the black on white and polychrome on white wares is not equaled. Kufic with triangular tops is usually loosely drawn (6, 7), the letters having longer stems than in related inscriptions in the black on white ware. Some of the lettering in this ware has foliated finials (36,40,44); some is limited in decoration to a few dots on

the sides of the letters (2). Associated with the inscriptions on a few pieces having a black or nearly black engobe are outlined compartments filled with dots and peacock eyes (7-9). Similar decorations occur with inscriptions in the ware decorated with yellow-staining black. Such pieces are rare in both wares, and some doubt must remain as to their place or places of origin.

In the present ware, as in those with a white engobe, there is a considerable use of repetitive, degenerate types of writing in the form of compact bands of decoration. Such bands may cross a bowl from rim to rim (3) or encircle the wall parallel to the rim (10). When the engobe is red, such a band may be painted in white on a band of black (49). A script so degenerate as hardly to be recognized as derived from writing occurs on a few pieces made without an engobe (34), on which it is drawn in a black containing chrome, which yellows the glaze. The same "script," drawn in the same pigment, is frequently encountered in the ware decorated with yellow-staining black, used not in interweaving bands, as here, but in radial bands, conventional borders, and outlined compartments.

Another degenerate form of lettering used in the present ware consists of a single "letter" employed in a purely decorative manner (53). Similar letters occasionally occur in the buff ware.

Various technical methods were used by the potters of this ware to achieve similar decorative results. For example, a cable pattern was made in three different ways. To achieve his pattern with the greatest precision, the potter applied a stroke of white slip and then with a point scratched his crossings through to the dark engobe beneath (45), a method also used in the black on white and the polychrome on white wares. In a second technique, producing a less neat result, the elements of the cable were painted individually with the brush lifted at the proper gaps (6, 7, 36); this technique is also found in the black on white and the polychrome on white wares. In the third technique, peculiar to the present ware, the cable pattern was drawn in a dark pigment on a local ground of white (29). The first and third techniques were also employed to produce a dark wavy line upon a radial line of white slip, the line either scratched through the slip (11) or painted upon it (26).

The range of quality in this ware is comparable to that of others found in Nishapur. Some of the vessels, that is, were obviously made as cheap pieces, while others betoken the skill of masters.

There is uncertainty as to when this ware was first made and where it was developed. According to the Russian archeologist N. Chepelev, the earliest examples of underglaze slip painting on a colored engobe (Chepelev,

Iskusstvo, 1, pp. 48–49) were made in the sixth or seventh century in Sogdia (Transoxiana). The Russian work at Pendzhikent and other sites of the sixth and seventh centuries has not backed up this opinion, however, since these sites have yielded no pieces like Chepelev's. Chepelev's pieces have now been more convincingly reassigned to the ninth and tenth centuries (Erdmann, *Faenza*, XXV, pls. xxiii, top, and xxiv), and Arthur Lane's assertion that no glazed ware of any kind was made in Transoxiana

or eastern Iran before the Samanid period (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, p. 17) remains correct.

Regardless of its date of first manufacture, the present ware was obviously made on a big scale in Gurgan, Khurasan, and Transoxiana, whereas in western Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Egypt it was never fully developed. Since production of the ware continued in Transoxiana through the centuries, one may suspect that this region was the one that first produced it.

1 BOWL

D 26, H 8.9 cm ; Sabz Pushan

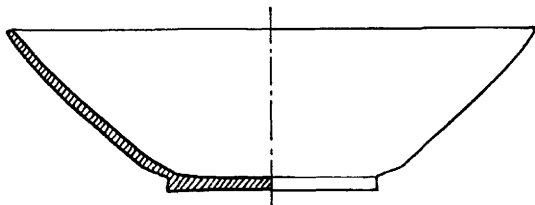
MIB

Reddish body, near-black engobe. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, undecorated. Interior, three rings of rosettes, irregularly spaced, with a single rosette on the bottom. The motif is composed of a disk of red surmounted by three white spots and surrounded by two rings of white spots, those of the outer ring much larger than those of the inner. Tenth century. For similar rosettes, see 17 and 18. For a bowl closely resembling 1, reputedly from Nishapur, see *Ceramic Art of Iran* Exhibition Catalogue, no. 79. Bowls with this kind of decoration, but incorporating other motifs, were not peculiar to Nishapur, however, since they have been found at Afrasiyab (Stoliarov Photograph 4, row C, nos. 1, 5, page 367), Shahr-i-Daqianus (Stein, *Archaeological Reconnaissances*, pl. xxi, no. 268), and Bust (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, pl. xxii, nos. 374, 375), those of Bust being of a later date than those of Nishapur.

2 BOWL

D 20.6, H 6.3 cm ; exact provenance unknown

MMA 37.40.22



1:3

Yellowish red body, near-black engobe. Thinly turned. Base, slightly concave, has neither engobe nor glaze. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is undecorated. Decoration on the interior is in white slip, here and there tinted brown by the engobe. At the rim, a sawtooth. On the bottom, a motif of three conjoined spots. (The triple mark of a stilt is also present.) On the wall, a repeated stylized inscription, base toward the rim, probably *barakeh* (blessing). The treatment is ornamental, with the three vertical letters diminishing sharply in height and three

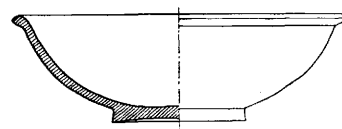
projecting dots added to the *kaf*. See 4 for another version of this addition.

3 DISH

D 11.6, H 5.7 cm ; Sabz Pushan

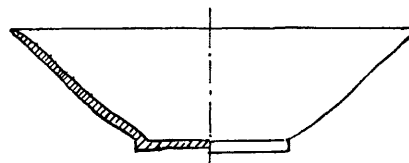
MIB

Bright red body, near-black engobe, white slip painting, greenish glaze. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is undecorated. Interior: a compact band of "inscription" suggesting the word *barakeh* (blessing), repeated, crosses from rim to rim. At the rim, centered in the empty space (and probably repeated opposite), a device consisting of a spot flanked by triangular forms. The style of the inscription, which also occurs in the black on white ware (Group 3, 59), seems to have been popular in the late tenth century and probably continued into the eleventh. Several variations were found in this ware (49, for example). Dishes with everted rims had the *barakeh*-like words in short bands, one on the bottom and four around the wall.



1:3

A dish from Sabz Pushan in the Metropolitan (40.170.301) shows the writing in even more stylized form, the band consisting of four squares each containing a *kaf*-like sign with supplementary strokes extending in from the frame to fill the spaces:



1:3

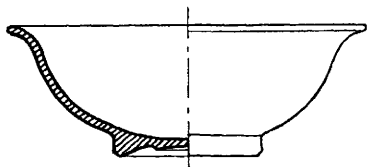


1:2

4 DISH

D 11.5, H 5.7 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Near-black engobe, white slip painting, greenish glaze. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, has groups of parallel slanting strokes of white increasing in length to form triangular shapes (see drawing at 5). The principal decoration on the interior is a band of foliated Kufic consisting of the word *barakeh* (blessing), repeated once. Pairs of spots have been added to the tops of the *kafs*. Above and below the inscription is a group of three overlapping spots. The rim is decorated with a few white ovals. There are two related dishes in the present ware. One in the Metropolitan from the excavations (38.40.202) differs from 4 in that it has an everted lip and an inscription without additional decoration and with slightly different

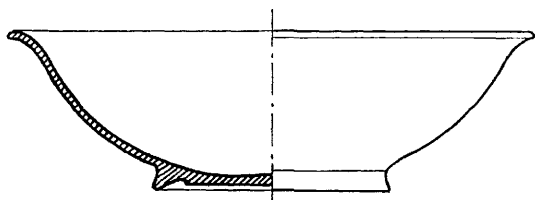


1:3

dottings. The second of these dishes, once in the Matosian collection and almost certainly from Nishapur, has trifoliate forms in place of the groups of overlapping spots. The exteriors of both these dishes are decorated like 4. The three-spot device occurs on other examples of this ware, sometimes carelessly treated (14, 25), sometimes well drawn (38, 39, 46).

5 BOWL

D 20, H 6.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.518



1:3

Reddish body covered with purplish engobe that stains the greenish glaze deep brown. Turned quite thin, the lip everted, the base neatly made, with a deep, sloping groove. The foot ring thus formed is not typical of Nishapur. The contour of the bowl is distinctly convex, a feature common in Afrasiyab, uncommon in Nishapur. The exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is decorated at the rim with groups of sloping lines in white, their length increasing to form triangular shapes. On the bottom, the marks of a



1:2

stilt. The principal element of the decoration, painted in white, is a fantastic bird. Its wings, connected to its body by long curved lines, are outspread beside its head. Each is decorated with a simple disk in reserve and a band in reserve adorned with white dots. Such wings, with a circle in the upper part, the upper part separated from the lower by a decorated band, and often much more elaborately decorated, were produced in the late tenth century and later, both in ceramics (Group 12, 191) and stone (Falke, *Kunstgeschichte der Seidenweberei*, I, fig. 183). The spaces around the bird are filled with outlined compartments containing dots and forms in reserve. Such compartments occur on a number of vessels with a near-black engobe (7-9), their irregularly indented outline sometimes echoing the shape of the adjacent decoration, and sometimes (as on 5) ignoring it. The rather elaborate forms seen within the compartments of 5 seem to be unique. The decoration at the rim consists of swags of white that contain a row of white dots (not apparent in the illustration).

Several fragments of bowls with generally similar decorations were found. The exterior of one was decorated with script whose letters had triangular tops in the manner of 6 and 7. The spirit of all these pieces and related ones is that of Transoxiana, despite their origin in Iran (Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 563 A; *Erickson Exhibition Catalogue*, p. 26, no. 15; Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 17A, a jar). The first and second of the cited pieces have rim decorations like that of 5.

6 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 22.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Body buff to reddish brown. Engobe a warm near black where not glazed; where covered by the greenish glaze, an intense dark brown. The white slip painting is unpleasantly streaked with brown that has run from the engobe. Decoration: five lines of inscription on the bottom, encircled by an interwoven cable, and a line of inscription encircling the wall. Although it is possible that another cable appeared above the inscription on the wall (compare 7), the absence of decorative filling in the spaces between the letters suggests that this was not the case. The lines of the cable were painted individually, contrary to the practice in the black on white and polychrome wares, where the effect of interweaving is obtained by scratching white lines through a band of black. However, the scratching technique is also found in the present ware (45). For still another method of making a cable—by superimposing dark drawing upon a light ground—see 29. Not enough remains of the inscriptions to decipher them, but they were probably once meaningful. The vertical letters, when juxtaposed, diminish in height (compare 2), the heads of the letters are roughly triangular, and some of the letters end in an S-curve—a combination peculiar to this ware.

7 a,b BOWL FRAGMENT

W 25.8 cm ; Tepe Madrasah
MMA 40.170.475

Buff body. Intense dark brown engobe beneath greenish glaze. This was a large bowl, approximately 38 centimeters in diameter. On the wall, a band of inscription between two cables. The inscription, in a different style from that of 6, with the prolongation of the triangular heads being sharper and more delicate, has not been deciphered. The spaces between the letters are filled with compartments containing dots and peacock eyes, a form of decoration that in the present ware is associated both with inscriptions and a decoration of birds (Hobson, *Islamic Pottery*, fig. 36; Erdmann, *Pantheon*, XVIII, p. 163, upper left). The lines of the cables, as on 6 (where see further comment), are painted individually. The decoration at the rim, a series of swags filled with short strokes with a short projection where the swags meet, appears in two other wares of Nishapur, the imitation luster (Group 6, 45) and the opaque yellow ware (not illustrated). On the exterior (7b) is a pseudo inscription, more fanciful and graceful than that on the interior. Its groups of triple vertical strokes are unusual in having circular blobs at their tips.

8 FRAGMENT (jar or pitcher)

W 16 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Near-black engobe, greenish glaze. Around the shoulder a pseudo inscription in white slip repeating double verticals, the spaces between these filled with compartments of irregular shape containing dots and peacock eyes without the central spot.

Calligraphy was not the only decoration applied to the shoulder of such vessels (see 45). The shoulder of a pitcher in the Metropolitan (53.170.1), acquired by purchase, is decorated with six circumscribing lines of small white X's (Wilkinson, *Iranian Ceramics*, pl. 25). Its neck has a pseudo inscription, its rim a sawtooth on the exterior, a debased cable pattern on the interior.

9 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 17.5 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Buff body, near-black engobe, greenish glaze. Decoration appears as greenish white. On the interior, its base near the rim, an adaptation of Kufic writing, the spaces between the letters filled with compartments whose outlines roughly echo those of the letters. The compartments contain dots and peacock eyes, some of whose center spots are linked to the outlines. On the exterior (not illustrated), groups of slanting strokes diminish in length to form triangular shapes, as on 5.

10 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 19.2 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.498

A portion of this fragment is in Teheran. Reddish body, turned very thin. The glaze has colored the almost black engobe a deep brown, and the engobe, which covers the exterior as well as the interior, has somewhat purpled the glaze over the white slip painting. Decoration: a sawtooth at the rim and a band of a debased script, meaningless even though dots purporting to be diacritical marks are present. The exterior is undecorated. No other example was found of this particular style of script in this ware; however, a complete bowl of this ware, probably found in Nishapur after 1940 and now in the collection of Richard Ettinghausen, has the script, a rim decoration resembling that of 7, and a bird on the bottom.

11 DISH

D 11.3, H 3.8 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 38.40.295

Reddish body, purplish black engobe, greenish glaze, browned by the engobe. The entire piece, including its slightly concave base, is covered with engobe and glaze. Lip everted and turned downward. Exterior undecorated. Interior decoration: radial and intermediate bands crudely painted in white slip, with wavy lines scratched through them to reveal the engobe. The bands are tinged green by the glaze. For a variation of the design and technique, see 26.

12 DISH

D 12.2, H 3.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.89

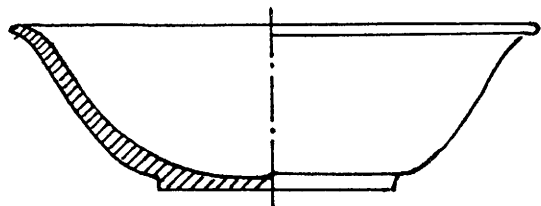
Smooth reddish body. Thinly turned, the exterior trimmed here and there with a tool. Flat base. Of the same general color as 11, but with the engobe so thinly applied that the ground is patchy in tone. On the exterior the engobe extends only about a third of the way down, although in one place it has run to the base. The exterior is also incompletely glazed; where the glaze extends beyond the engobe, the body is yellowish brown. Inside, on the bottom, are the tips of a stilt. Decoration: four large circles around the wall and one on the bottom, consisting of white bands with a wavy line scratched through them (for technique, compare 11). In and between the circles are loosely drawn trilobed forms such as appear frequently in this ware.

13 DISH

D 11.2, H 3.8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.171

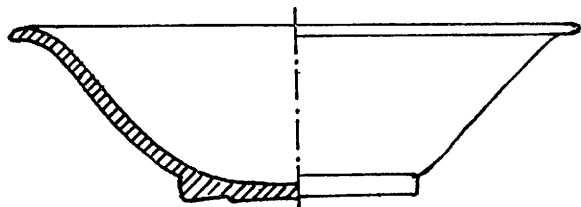
Reddish body, near-black engobe, colorless glaze. Everted

lip, flat base. A "second," with a piece of another dish attached to it on the exterior. No decoration on the exterior. Decoration on the interior consists of evenly spaced groups of four spots of white slip. Such bowls appear to have been made in Afrasiyab as well as Nishapur. In Afrasiyab the same kind of decoration was applied to vessels with straight, flaring sides, measuring as much as 30 centimeters in diameter (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. xvii, top). A variation of 13, from the same site, has a glaze over a yellowish slip with groups of green dots substituting for the white ones. Bowls of the shape of 13



1:2

sometimes had a slight bevel on the base, as seen in still another example from Sabz Pushan:



1:2

14 DISH

D 13.2, H 4 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.168

Red body, near-black engobe, colorless glaze. The engobe and glaze descend only a little way on the exterior. Decoration: groups of three white spots, arranged in circumscribing circles, with a line of single spots around the rim. Dishes thus decorated were common in Nishapur. For another example, probably made in Nishapur, see Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, XIV, p. 12, fig. 12. On some examples, found by the Metropolitan's expedition, the groups of spots are fewer and more widely spaced. One so decorated, with a rosette of spots in the center, is in the Teheran museum. In other examples the groups consist of four spots. One of these is in Berlin (*ibid.*). Dishes with this type of decoration were also made with white spots on a red engobe. Jars were also made with this decoration in Nishapur, as evidenced by a waster (43).

Dishes similar to 14 were found at Afrasiyab (Erdmann, *Faenza*, XXV, pl. xxv b), and it is certain that they were manufactured in both places. Pieces decorated with triple white spots have also been found at Bust (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, pl. xxii, nos. 383, 385) and Gurgan (unpublished). In Nishapur such pieces were undoubtedly made throughout the tenth century and into the eleventh.

15 DISH FRAGMENT

D 16, H (estimated) 4 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.120

Reddish body, thinly turned. Purplish black engobe, colorless glaze. Exterior covered with engobe and glaze but undecorated. On the interior, a white curling stem forms four circles, in each of which is a trefoil. Between the circles are triangular leaves and long-pointed trefoils. After the outlines of the forms had been painted in white, the potter superimposed slip painting in red and olive green. Around the rim, a sawtooth. The color scheme, rare in Nishapur, is a feature of many Afrasiyab vessels. Probably tenth century. An import.

16 DISH

D 13.7, H 4.3 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Brownish black engobe. Decoration: seven rosettes of white dots, one on the bottom, the rest spaced around the wall, and a line of spots at the rim. This simple decoration was also found on vessels with a reddish brown engobe. Such vessels were doubtless made not only in Nishapur but in Afrasiyab and other centers in eastern Iran (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, pl. xxii, no. 386) and Transoxiana.

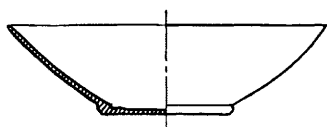
17 DISH

D 12.4, H 4 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.120
(Color Plate 7, page xviii)

Reddish body, purplish black engobe, greenish glaze. Exterior, undecorated, is covered with engobe and glaze only near the rim. On the bottom is a large rosette with three central spots of olive green and two surrounding rings of white spots. Similar rosettes, but with white central spots, occur on 1 and 18. On the wall are four more such rosettes, without the outer ring of white spots. Between the rosettes are trifoliate forms, the two outer leaves pointed and bent outward, the central one small and rounded. Similar forms, somewhat abbreviated, appear on a fragment of a small jar found at Shahr-i-Daqianus (Stein, *Archaeological Reconnaissances*, pl. xxi, no. 666). A bowl found after 1940, reputedly in Nishapur, has the same type of rosettes on bottom and wall as 17, but in place of the trifoliate form, a motif of two circular spots with a long triangular form above them (Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, XIV, p. 10, fig. 6). A larger bowl than the present one, this also has two rows of ornamentation around its wall rather than one.

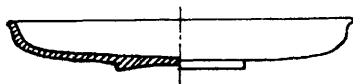
18 DISH

D 12.2, H 3.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB



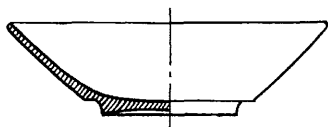
1:3

Red body, well turned. Near-black engobe, colorless glaze. Engobe and glaze extend only part way down the exterior. Decoration of rosettes (compare 1), with three superimposed white spots on the red disks tinted green by the dabbed addition of a copper base. Dishes with a similar decoration and an everted rim were found, such

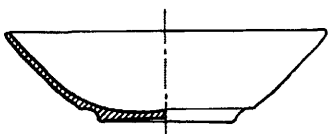


1:3

as this very shallow example from Sabz Pushan. Small bowls such as this show a certain variation in shape seen in the drawings:



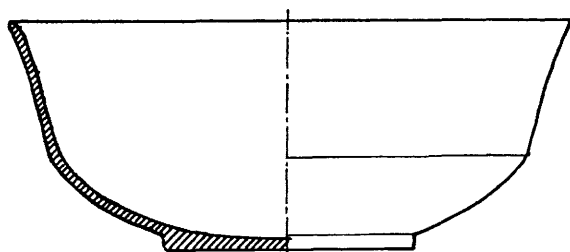
1:3



1:3

19 BOWL (some restoration)

D 23, H 9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.92



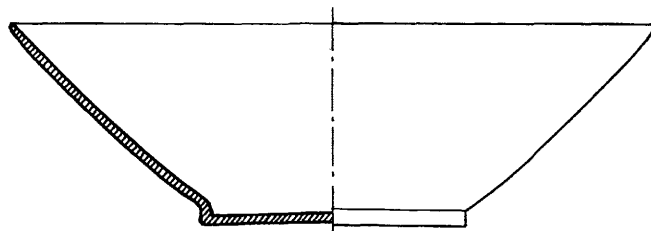
1:3

Reddish buff body, earth red engobe, colorless glaze. Turned very thin. Flat base. The shape, with an abrupt change of curve halfway between rim and base, is unusual; for another occurrence see Group 1, 36. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is undecorated. On the interior, painted in purplish black, is a four-lobed rosette made from a cross at the center, extended by curved lines to a ring near the rim, with four supplementary "petals" added. Superimposed on the lines are dots of white slip.

Two motifs fill the spaces: a trifoliate form and a form suggesting a pomegranate. Both are drawn on white slip in a brownish pigment that yellows the glaze in its vicinity. Both these motifs, especially the trifoliate form, appear frequently in this ware; neither is found in other Nishapur wares. Around the rim: a sawtooth in black.

20 BOWL (restored)

D 25, H 8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.128

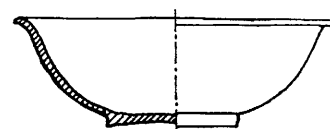


1:3

Reddish buff body, strong earth red engobe, red brown beneath the glaze. Badly discolored on one side—a kiln injury. Turned very thin; some trimming with a tool on the exterior. Base slightly concave. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze only about halfway to the base, is undecorated. Interior: a swastika, developing from a small circle in the center, generates an eight-lobed figure bounded by a ring near the rim. The drawing is done in black lines with superimposed white spots. At the tips of the swastika are objects filled in with olive green slip and outlined with a greenish black pigment that yellows the glaze. Although the shape of the objects is leaflike, a cross-band of hatching makes them resemble vases with tall, pointed covers. In the spaces of the figure are trifoliate forms drawn on white slip in a yellow-staining greenish black. Around the rim, flattened half-moons.

21 DISH

D 13.2, H 4.5 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 39.40.13



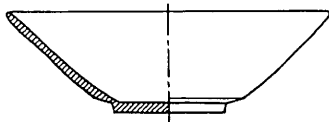
1:3

Pinkish buff body, red brown engobe. Everted rim, slightly concave base. Exterior is covered with engobe but is glazed only at the rim. Interior: two circles, one around the bottom and one just below the rim, connected by four loops, the drawing in black with superimposed white dots. Between the loops and in the center are trifoliate forms drawn on white slip in a yellow-staining sienna. Spaced around the rim, four pairs of black blobs.

22 DISH

D 12, H 4 cm ; Tepe Madrasedh
MIB

Red body, red engobe, colorless glaze. Exterior undecorated. Interior: a cross and a square within a circle, drawn in black with superimposed white dots. In the spaces, trifoliate forms drawn in a yellow-staining pigment on dabs of white slip. Many small dishes with related designs were found, including one whose bands formed a Solomon's seal. The drawing shows a typical shape for small dishes of this type:



1:3

23 DISH

D 10.6, H 3.4 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 40.170.126

Reddish body, brick red engobe, colorless glaze. Poorly turned, with ridges on the exterior. Base slightly concave. No glaze or decoration on exterior. Interior: three radial lines, black with white dots, rise from center to rim, each one giving off a subsidiary line on one side. The spaces are filled with trifoliate forms in white slip with superimposed drawing in yellowish pigment. Three of the forms have been lengthened with stems. At the rim, a poorly drawn sawtooth in black. Giving the effect of rotation, this is one of the basic tenth-century designs of Nishapur and Afrasiyab. For its use in the polychrome on white ware of Nishapur, see Group 4, 51-55.

24 DISH

D 11.4, H 3.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.206

Reddish buff body, brownish red engobe, colorless glaze. Everted lip. Flat base. The exterior, covered three-quarters of the way to the base with engobe, is unglazed. Decoration: concentric rings of spotted disks. The top and third rings are of white disks with black spots; the second ring and the single disk in the center are black with white spots. The white slip has spalled in several places, a not uncommon occurrence when the painting is thick, taking with it the superimposed black spots.

Small dishes with incurved rims, and also jars, were found with red engobes and a decoration of white-dotted black disks. Rather than dots, the disks of some related pieces had intersecting white lines upon them, while others had two strokes of white, elaborated to resemble Arabic letters.

25 DISH

D 12.4, H 4 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Reddish body, earth red engobe. Decoration on bottom and wall of crudely painted triple spots; rim ringed with a line of single spots. Small dishes with black engobes were given generally similar decorations (14, 16).

26 DISH

D 14, H 4.2 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Reddish body, earth red engobe, greenish glaze. Decoration: radial and intermediate bands in white slip, a wavy line painted upon them in a dark raw sienna that stains the glaze yellow. For a variation of the design and technique, see 11. Other variations include a dish on which radial white bands with painted lines alternate with black bands studded with spots of white slip.

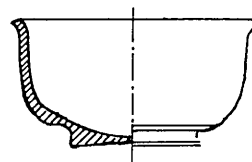
27 DISH

D 12.3, H 4 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Reddish body, no engobe, buff surface. Exterior undecorated. Interior: three radial bands rise from the center to the rim, superimposed on bands forming a lozenge. The bands, drawn in segments, are in a black that yellows the glaze. The spaces are filled with thin-pointed trifoliate forms drawn in the same black on local grounds of white slip. The same kind of decoration was also painted on bowls provided with a red engobe. Accordingly, 27 may be considered a cheap version.

28 BOWL

D 9.6, H 5 cm ; near Tepe Madrasedh
MMA 40.170.94



1:3

A deep, small bowl with nearly vertical sides and flat, outwardly projecting lip. Reddish body. Earth red engobe, unevenly applied, on exterior and interior. On the exterior, poorly drawn rosettes consisting of disks of purplish black pigment with superimposed spots of white slip. A similar rosette is centered on the bottom. Today in Samarkand, small dishes with an earth red engobe, as well as others glazed in a bluish green, are still being decorated with such disks.

29 PLATTER FRAGMENT

W 16.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.654

Another portion of this piece is in the Teheran museum. Smooth red body, bright earth red engobe. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is undecorated. The design on the interior may be considered a more elaborate version of 21, utilizing the pomegranatelike figure of 19. Many of the spots of white slip placed upon the areas of purplish black have spalled, giving a fortuitous impression of white rings. At the rim are narrow lunettes dotted with white. The circumscribing ring at the junction of the rim and bottom is most probably a poorly rendered cable design, though it is not impossibly pseudo writing (compare Group 8, 32). The black lines painted on the white slip here and in the pomegranates have stained the glaze yellow.

For variants of the cable design, see 6, 7, and 36, whereon the two strands of the motif are painted side by side in white slip, and 45, on which a solid band of slip is scratched with a point so that the dark engobe defines the strands.

30 DISH

D 11, H 3.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Earth red engobe, reddish brown beneath colorless glaze. Everted rim, flat base. Decoration: evenly spaced groups of four spots in a clear, strong green applied on the glaze. For another version of the design, see 13.

31 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

D 11 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Reddish body, earth red engobe, colorless glaze. Decoration: a central circular spot and four radial conical forms in black, upon which leaflike forms are painted in white slip. Intervening spaces filled alternately with the now-familiar trifoliate form and what is apparently the pomegranatelike form seen on 19.

32 DISH FRAGMENT

W 10 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.482

Buffish red body, light red engobe, colorless glaze. Base slightly concave. Exterior: engobe only at rim; no glaze. Interior: circles at center, curling lines on wall, and one of the familiar trifoliate forms, all painted in black with superimposed white spots. At the rim, a near-black band adorned with groups of four white spots. The central motif may represent a fanciful bird; a dish found in the excavations, now in Teheran, is decorated with a large

bird with foliated crest, painted in the same technique. See also 48.

Fragments of somewhat similar pieces have been found at Shahr-i-Daquiān (Stein, *Archaeological Reconnaissance*, pl. xxi, no. 420). Preoccupation with a bird as a single main element in slip-painted wares is more characteristic of Gurgan and Mazanderan than Khurasan or Transoxiana.

33 DISH

D 11, H 10.8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Reddish body. Unusual in having a gray engobe that becomes pale grayish purple where glazed. Base slightly concave. Flaring sides. Decoration: bands of black with superimposed rosettes in white. One band crosses the bowl from rim to rim, the other (possibly repeated on the missing side) occupies a section of the rim. The rosettes are of the simple type seen on 16. For the fragment of another dish of this size and same peculiar color, see 48.

34 BOWL FRAGMENT

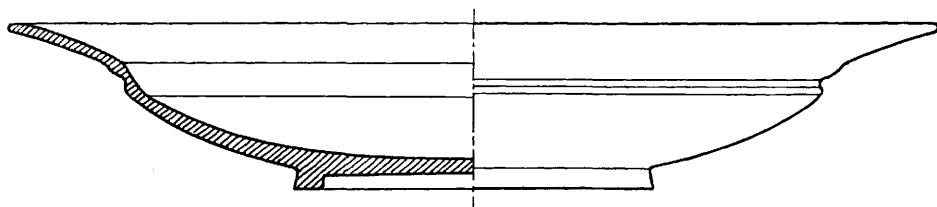
W 14.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.528

Buff body, no engobe, clear glaze. Exterior, glazed, is undecorated. Interior: bands of white pigment (rather than slip) upon which an extremely debased pseudo-Kufic script is drawn in such a fashion that the bands seem to interweave. The drawing, in a black containing chrome, has yellowed the glaze locally. Late tenth or early eleventh century. A similar "script," used in a number of different ways, is a common feature in the ware decorated with yellow-staining black. A more sophisticated use of the technique is to be seen in an unpublished bowl from Nishapur or Gurgan in the British Museum in which the ribbons form ogee-topped panels, each containing a bird.

35 FRAGMENT

W 12 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.484

Buff body, no engobe, surface grayish beneath colorless glaze. Exterior glazed but undecorated. Interior: white bands decorated with a cable pattern in yellow-staining black. The effect reminiscent of 34, but the piece poorer in every respect. Although possibly made in Nishapur, more likely imported from Gurgan, where this type of pottery was common, as is evident from the sherds collected there.



1:3

36 a,b PLATTER (reconstruction)

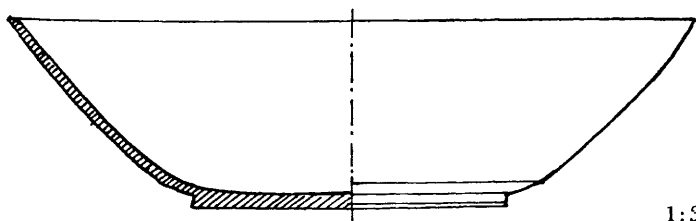
D 37.7, H 6.6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.67

Reddish body, bright earth red engobe, white slip painting, colorless glaze. On the superior surface of the flat rim, a group of six half-palmettes alternates with a pair of trilobed forms emerging from a disk. Two of the half-palmettes extend laterally, two rise vertically in a heart-like space from whose outline two more grow out along the rim. The fine black lines in these decorations have been scratched through the slip with a point. Outlining the well of the platter is a cable, its lines painted individually (as on 6 and 7). In the center area is a band of foliated Kufic, its base toward the center, and a geometrical design having both circular and angular projections. The letters of the inscription have humped excrescences; similar humps occur in scripts in the black on white ware (Group 3, 38, 54). Platters with such elaborately decorated centers are encountered in the polychrome on white ware of both Nishapur and Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 244, fig. 15, left). The underside of the piece, which is furnished with a foot ring, is decorated to a surprising extent, considering that the painting would not be visible when the platter was in use. Short radial bands of pseudo Kufic alternate on the rim with circles filled with S-curves, additional lateral curves, and dots. The small portion remaining of the original base indicates that a line of inscription once traversed it.

The resemblance of the decoration on the superior surface of the rim to that of two mold-made pitchers found at Susa (Koechlin, *Les Céramiques*, pl. v, no. 26, and David-Weill, *Revue des Arts*, I, pp. 247-249) is striking, even though the platter was of a different period. The pitchers have been given early dates, even of the Sasanian period, whereas the humped Kufic of the platter indicates clearly that it was not made before the end of the tenth century.

37 a,b BOWL

D 27, H 7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.98

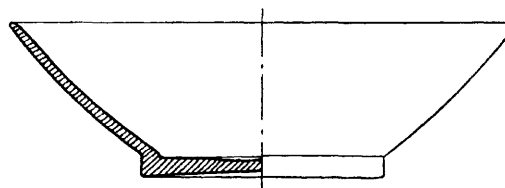


1:3

Buff body, dark red, nearly black, engobe, white slip painting, clear strong green glaze. Glaze has pooled on the bottom. Base, slightly concave, has some streaks of engobe and splashes of glaze. Interior: a circumscribing band consisting of an undulating stem from which grow curling tendrils and forms roughly resembling leaves or palmettes, the decoration bounded by a line above and one below. The bottom is filled with interlacing bands that form almost complete circles; these contain curled stems and foliate forms. The spaces around the circumference of the design are filled with a version of the trifoliate form that occurs on many examples of this ware. The exterior is decorated with a number of spriglike foliations, probably once five. Location indicates early tenth century. The finding of a waster (43) decorated in the same technique—dark engobe, white slip painting, clear green glaze—supports the view that 37 was locally manufactured.

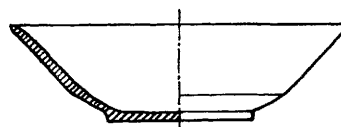
38 BOWL

D 19.2, H 6 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.32



1:3

Red body, dark red, nearly black, engobe, strong green glaze. The whole of the exterior, including the base, which is slightly concave, is covered with engobe, but the glaze extends only to the foot. Broken, the bowl was repaired in antiquity by means of metal ties in small holes drilled through the body. These ties were of iron, determined from the rust in the holes. Decoration: concentric circles of trefoils made by dividing appropriately shaped blobs of white slip with a point. The motif, probably a crude form of the petallike form seen on 39, closely resembles a popular motif in the polychrome on white ware (Group 4, 6). Fragments of other green-glazed bowls were found with a similar decoration, but with the motif consisting of four white spots:



1:3

39 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 13 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.584

Another portion of this bowl is in the Teheran museum. Grayish buff body, red brown engobe, white slip painting, yellowish brown glaze. Exterior undecorated. Around the wall in concentric circles, a trefoil, or petallike form, divided in three by means of a point. A better-drawn version of the motif on 38.

40 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 15.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Reddish body, brown engobe, white slip painting, warm yellow glaze, spalled in places. Decoration: a line of foliated Kufic, base toward the rim, the foliations unusually large. Judging by the location as well as the style, end of tenth century or beginning of eleventh.

41 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 14 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.583

Reddish body, brown engobe, white slip painting, warm yellow glaze—the glaze speckled black due to insufficient grinding of the metallic base. Bowl has upturned rim. Decoration: a band containing curving strokes emerging from an undulating "stem." For a better version, see 37. The exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is decorated at the rim with groups of vertical strokes of white, in the manner of 4 and 5.

42 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 12 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.582

Another portion of this bowl is in Teheran. Both potting and decoration of the finest quality. Buff body, red ochre engobe, white slip painting, clear yellow glaze free of any trace of brown. Decoration: a Kufic inscription, base toward the rim, its curves and modulations in thickness sensitive and precise. As no other examples of this color, quality, and style were found, probably an import, perhaps from Afrasiyab. Tenth century.

43 JAR (waster)

H 8.1 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 48.101.1

Buff body, reddish engobe, white slip painting, clear green glaze. Flat base. Some glaze but no engobe on the interior. Decoration consists of spots in groups of three and four. In places the glaze was badly burned in the kiln. It forms

a pool on one side. A portion of another jar adheres to one side, and there is damage where the attached piece was broken off.

Fragments of large, dark-colored jars were found, decorated on the outside with symmetrical groups of three white spots. The interiors of these pieces were not covered with engobe, but some were glazed. There is little question but that this type of ware was made in the kilns of several cities.

44 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 7 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Crudely made. Reddish engobe, white slip painting, yellow glaze. Decoration: an elaborately foliated script, base toward the rim, the *kaf* carrying three foliations. An unusual style in Nishapur. Probably end of tenth or beginning of eleventh century.

45 JAR FRAGMENT (shoulder)

W 8.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Purplish black engobe, white slip painting, practically colorless glaze stained in places by the engobe. Decoration: interlacing bands forming a cable and oval panels, the panels containing a four-leafed rosette. The appearance of interlacing has been achieved by the removal of the slip with a point. Fragments of other near-black jars were found with pseudo inscriptions on their shoulders: see 8.

46 BOWL FRAGMENT (rim)

W 5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Buff body, practically black engobe, white slip painting, clear glaze slightly stained by the engobe. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, shows no decoration. Interior: a rim line of half-moons and a petal motif that resembles those of 38 and 39. The motif was separated into two parts with a point. Further comment on the motif at 38. The remains of a very fine piece. A similar fragment, possibly of the same bowl, is in the Metropolitan (40.170.580). Rare in Nishapur, such bowls were probably imported from Afrasiyab. For a complete example of high quality, see Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 16A.

47 BOWL FRAGMENTS

Overall W 20 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.526

A portion of this example is in Teheran. Very hard buff body, intense black engobe, greenish glaze tinged yellow by the background at the edges of the white slip painting.

Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is undecorated. Interior: a Kufic inscription, base toward the rim. A finely made piece. The rarity of such bowls in Nishapur suggests that they were imports. For similar pieces found in Afrasiyab see Stoliarov Photograph 3, row D, no. 5 (page 367) and Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. v. In another example from Afrasiyab (Erdmann, *Faenza*, XXV, pl. xxv c) the style of the script is less close to that of 47.

48 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 13.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.485

Unusual grayish purplish engobe (compare 33). Decoration, painted in black with superimposed spots of white slip, a bird. Only its legs and feet remain. Rim pattern, a fret painted in white slip on a black band. Uncommon in Nishapur pottery, the fret appears in the pottery of Sistan (A. Stein, *Innermost Asia*, Oxford, 1928, pl. cxvii, A.021) and Lashkari Bazar (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, pl. xiii, no. 139).

49 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 9.7 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.483

Reddish engobe. Across the center, a band of black with superimposed pseudo inscription in white slip. The band possibly continued up to the rim on either side. Stilt marks present.

50 DISH

D 12.4, H 3.5 cm ; near Village Tepe
MMA 37.40.16
(Color Plate 7, page xviii)

Reddish body, earth red engobe. Well turned. Base slightly concave. Exterior undecorated. Interior: painted in black and dotted with white slip, a zigzag line between two parallel lines crossing the vessel, and a circumscribing line near the rim. On either side of the central band is a spiky plantlike form, painted in yellow-staining black on a local ground of white slip. Smaller triangular plantlike forms in the same technique fill the spaces of the zigzag.

51 DISH FRAGMENT

W 5.75 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA study piece

Reddish body, light red engobe. Decoration: radial lanceolate forms alternating with near circles, both forms painted in black, outlined with spots of white slip and filled with white-dotted rosettes. Filling most of the space between the forms is an area of white slip upon which small stars appear in yellow-staining black.

52 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 9.6 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Turned very thin. Light red engobe. Glaze colorless except where yellowed by decoration in yellow-staining black. Around the wall, a series of purplish black triangles, their bases toward the bottom, filled with rows of white spots. A white-dotted line of purplish black is at the rim; another encircles the bottom. In each triangular space around the wall is a small triangle of white slip with superimposed outline and spots in yellow-staining black. A disk of white on the bottom is ornamented in the same technique. Stilt marks present.

53 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 18.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 39.40.92

Red body, reddish engobe. The base, concave, has the characteristic appearance of an Afrasiyab piece, but no examples decorated like this one are included in the sherd collection in Berlin. In the center, five lozenges; the outer ones, having irregular sides, appear in a cruciform arrangement. Three are painted in black with superimposed white spots; two are painted in white with superimposed strokes of yellow-staining black. Around the wall are eight radial U-shapes, four in black with white spots, four in white with yellow-staining black. Although these shapes resemble letters, they have no orthographical meaning. The use of meaningless or nearly meaningless letters also occurs in the buff ware (Group 1, 62), but there, in the richer decoration, they play a subordinate role. For a variant of the lozenge device in another ware, see Group 8, 15.

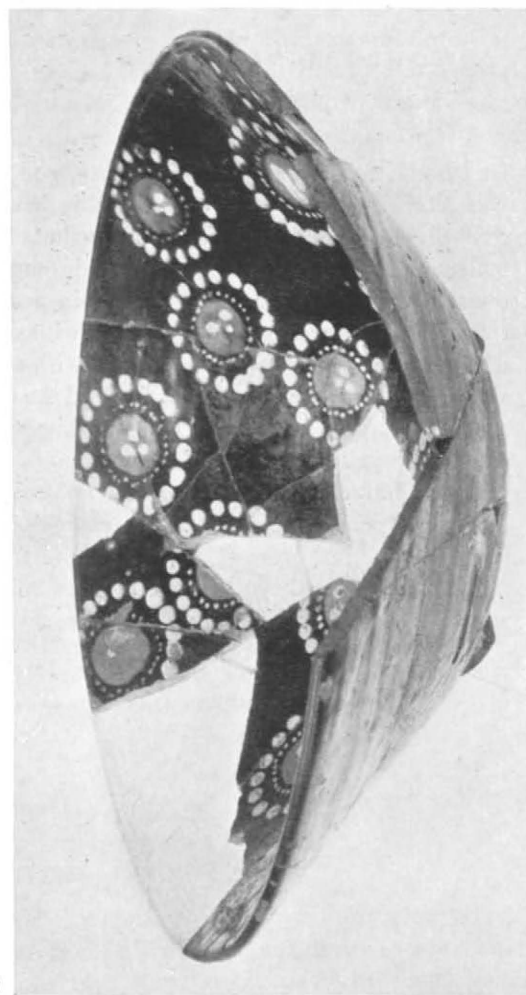
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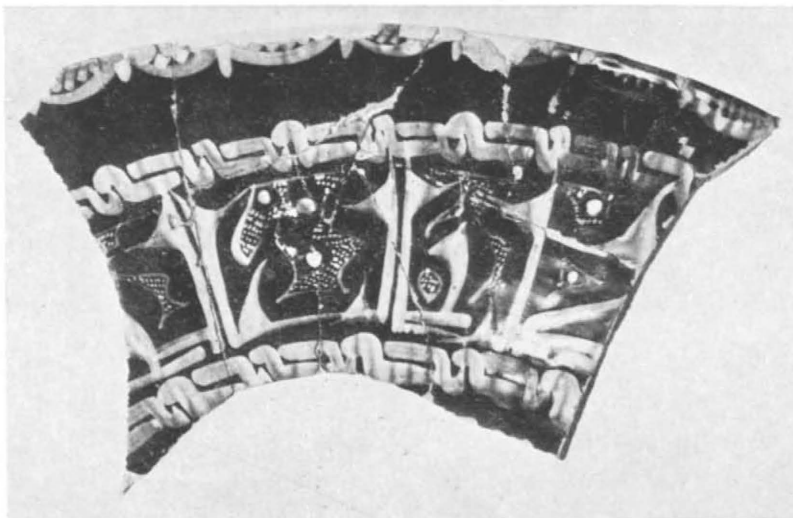
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6



7a



7b



8



9



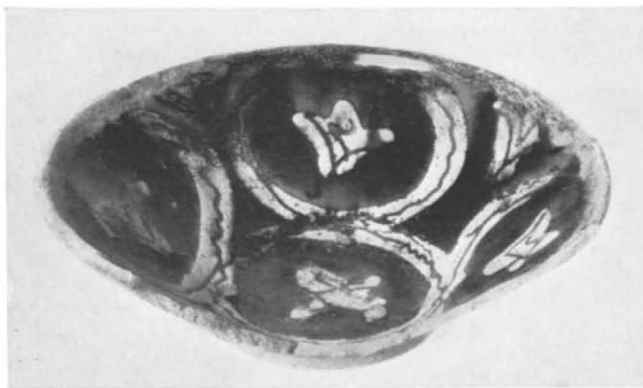
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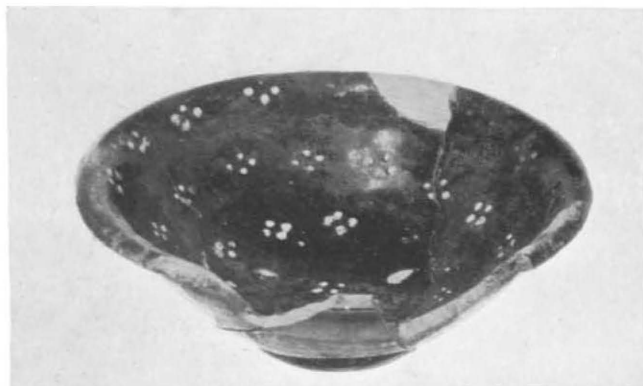
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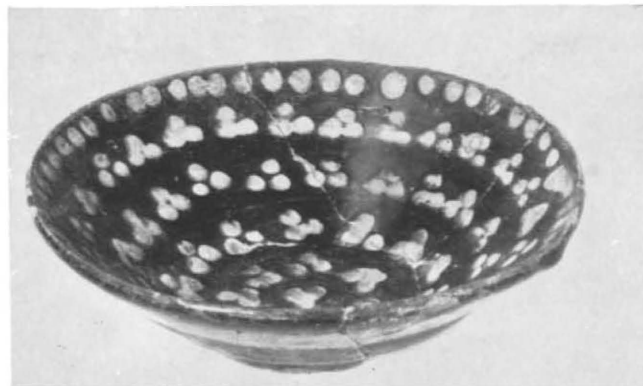
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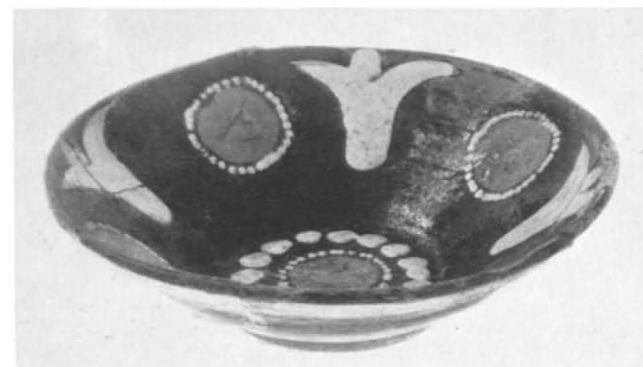
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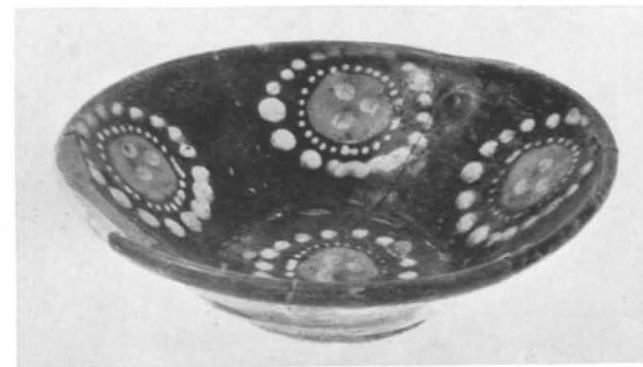
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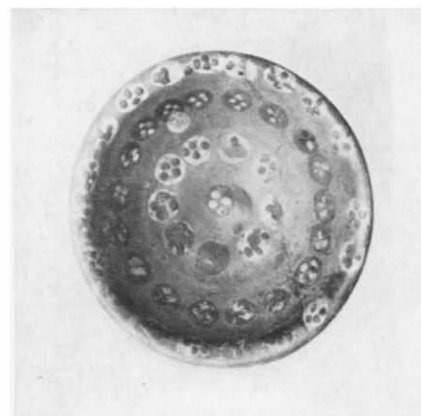
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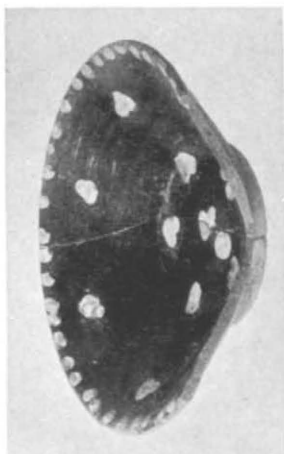
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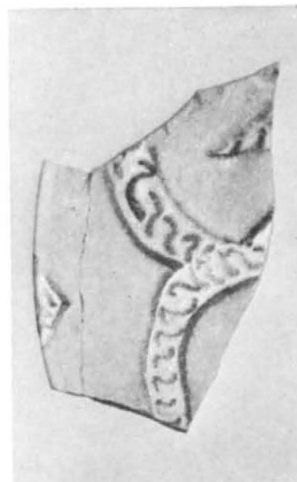
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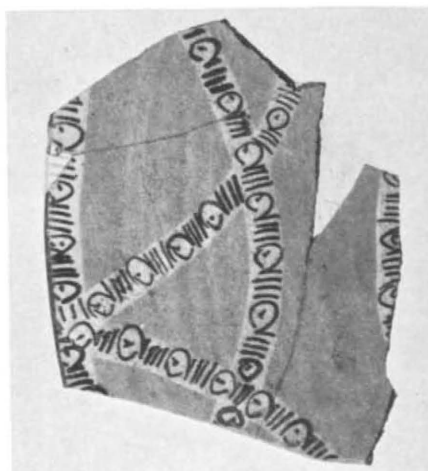
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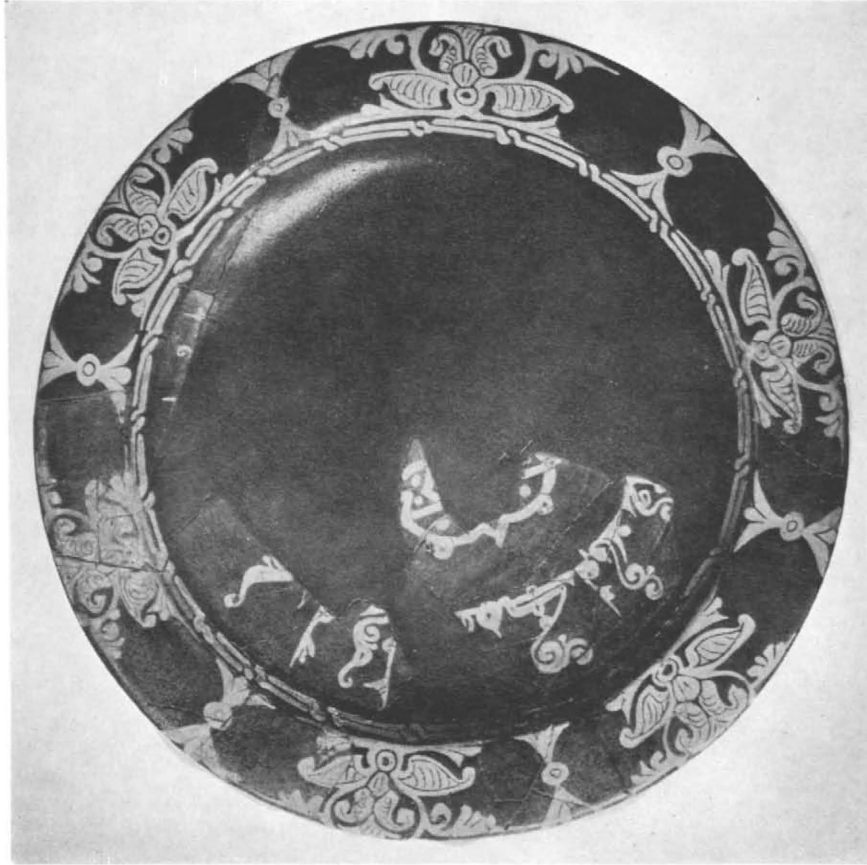


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33





36a



36b

37a



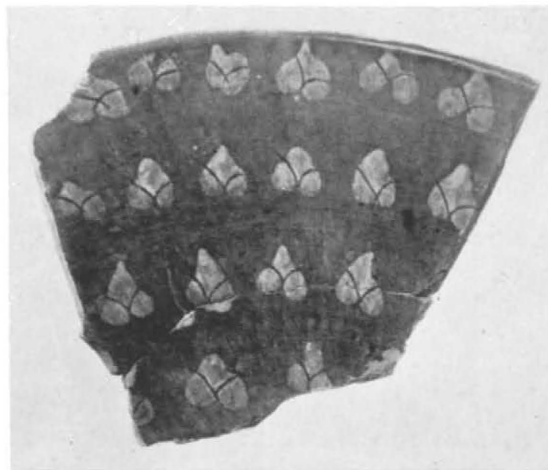
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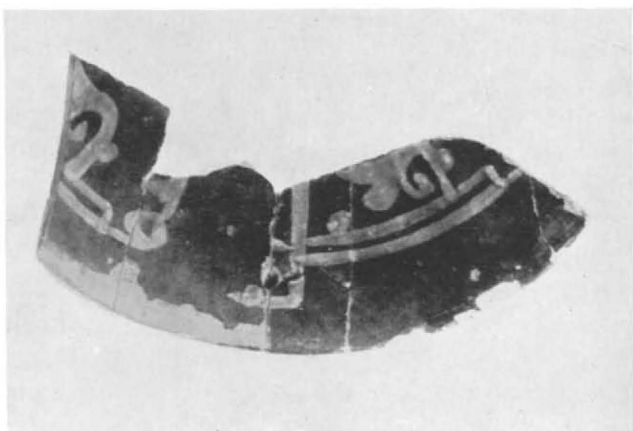
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41



42



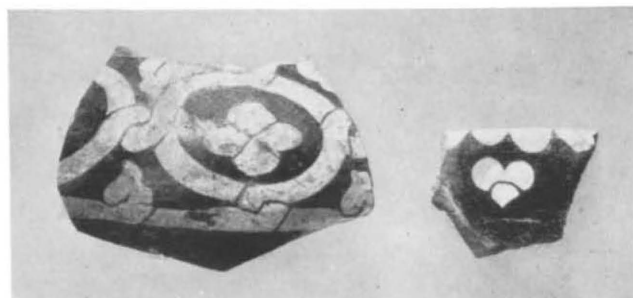
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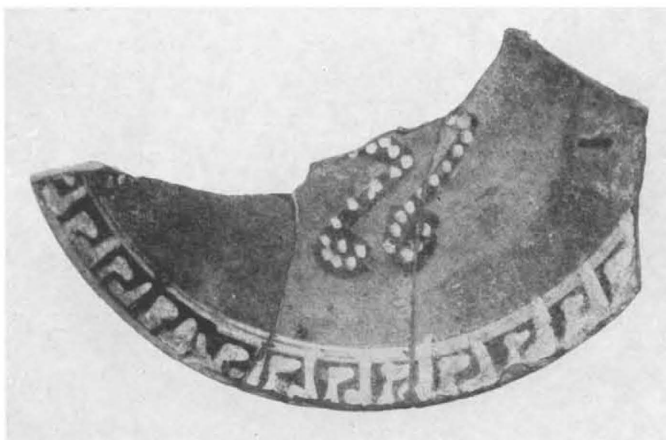
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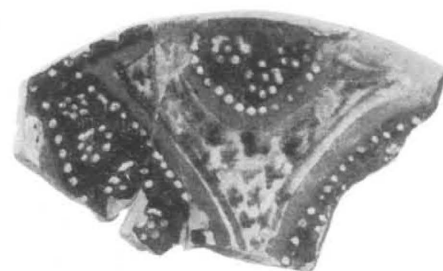
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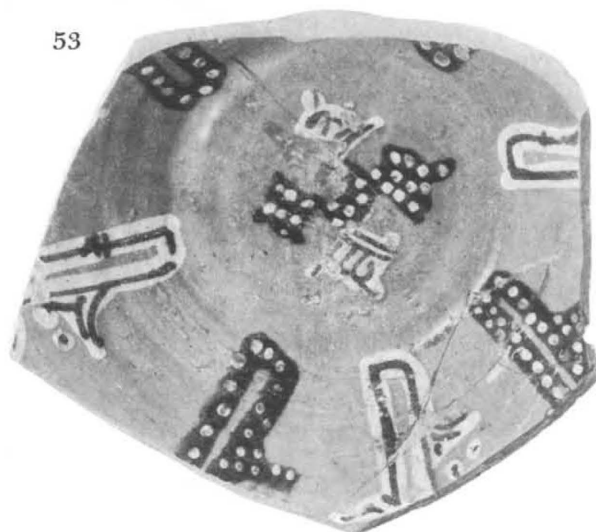
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53



6

Opaque White Ware and Its Imitations

A distinctive type of earthenware widely made in the Near East during the ninth and tenth centuries was one covered with an opaque white glaze containing lead, its degree of opacity depending on the amount of tin included. There is no evidence that such a glaze was employed in the Sasanian period—that is, from the third century to the seventh. Nonetheless it was not a new invention in the ninth century. Artificially prepared tin oxide was found in the tomb of Tut-ankh-Amun, who died in 1355 B.C. (A. Lucas, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries*, London, 1934, p. 125), and an opaque white glaze was used extensively on the tiles of a palace of Ramses II (1304–1237 B.C.) (W. C. Hayes, *Glazed Tiles From a Palace of Ramesses II at Kantir*, New York, 1937, pl. vii, p. 26). Perhaps the best-known ancient occurrence of such a glaze is on the brick decorations made in Babylon during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar (605–563 B.C.). The bricks, made of grit and clay, were molded in relief so that when assembled they formed figures of lions or composites of various beasts and birds. The opaque white glaze used on their bodies stands out boldly, together with a bright yellow, from a general background of blue (R. Koldewey, *Das Wieder Erstehende Babylon*, Leipzig, 1925, figs. 16, 29–31, 64). Nearly as well known, perhaps, is a frieze of archers from an Achaemenid palace built at Susa in the fourth century B.C.; on this the glaze is used both on the dresses of the archers and the ornament (*Encyclopédie photographique de l'art*, Paris, 1936, II, pp. 50–52).

Although the application of opaque white glaze to earthenware bowls seems to have been practiced in western Asia as early as the second millennium B.C. (Parrot, *Syria*, XVIII, p. 82, pl. xv), the white always appeared in combination with other colors: blue, yellow, or beige. Vessels glazed entirely white or near white do not seem to have been made generally until the Achaemenid period (sixth to fourth century B.C.). White-glazed vessels of this period and the succeeding Parthian period (323 B.C.–

A.D. 226) have been found at many sites, including Susa (a flask in the Metropolitan, 48.98.2) and Seleucia (Debevoise, *Parthian Pottery*, p. 34). The white of these early pieces is generally grayish, and the glaze on all is alkaline—a type of glaze not used in Nishapur until after the establishment there of an opaque white glaze containing lead.

As noted at the outset, it has not yet been demonstrated that opaque white glaze was used in the Sasanian period, even in the lowland regions where it had been used earlier. At Ctesiphon, for example, opaque white ware was unearthed only in the early Islamic areas. And present evidence, as noted in the Introduction, is that no glazed earthenware of any description was made in the plateau region of Iran during the Sasanian period.

Whether or not there was an interruption in the production of opaque white ware during the Sasanian period, the glaze was employed with great effect in Iraq by Islamic potters of the ninth century. Analysis of fragments of good-quality Iraqi ware found in Nishapur indicate that the opaque glaze of these imported pieces contains less lead than is found in clear lead glazes. The glaze appears to have been used initially in the Islamic period to imitate the white or cream-colored ware imported from China in the eighth and ninth centuries. The Chinese ware was high fired and porcelanous. The potters of Iraq were either unable to imitate it exactly or, more probably, they did not choose to do so. Lacking kaolin, a felspathic white clay, the white body used by the Chinese, and firing their pottery at lower temperatures, they achieved something of the effect by covering their yellow-burning clay with opaque white glaze. Although kaolin was not available to potters in Iraq, it is worth noting that nineteenth-century potters of Turkestan used this clay, obtaining it near Ablyk in the Karnan Mountains between Tashkent and Khokand (E. Schuyler, *Turkistan*, London, 1876, I, pp. 187–188).

The Chinese vessel most often copied in Iraq was a

bowl with five raised ribs or "rays" on the inner wall. The rims of the Chinese originals are slightly indented at the upper end of each rib, so that five wide, graceful lobes are suggested. The walls of these bowls vary in thickness from five to as little as two and a half millimeters, and the color varies from a cold white to a warm cream. Such pieces, or their remains, have been found at many sites in the Islamic world, including Nishapur (Group 10, 1-3, 5). The copies made in Iraq do not have the thinness and the fine cold white of the best Chinese pieces, and the copies made in Nishapur are even less adept. The grayish surface of some of the Islamic pieces may have been intended or it may be the result of time and decay; the technical investigation that would determine this has not yet been made.

It is not known precisely where the Chinese ware was first imitated. While the center could have been Samarra, which was active as the seat of the caliphate from 836 to 892, it was more likely either Basra or Kufa. It is known that glassmakers, mat weavers, and potters went from Basra to Samarra and that painters and potters went from Samarra to Kufa. Fragments of the ware found at a kiln site at Basra are in the Metropolitan (52.130.1-26). The center in question could also have been Baghdad, which, as the earlier capital, would have drawn to itself many of the best craftsmen. In any case, the potters of Nishapur evidently acquired the technique from their fellow craftsmen in Iraq.

The potters of Iraq copied in their opaque white ware other Chinese shapes than those with raised rays and also made shapes that were not inspired by Chinese models. On the latter, not content with the unadorned white of the Chinese pieces, they usually added decoration in color according to their own notions of design. These more elaborate pieces, which were highly prized, fall into two groups: one decorated with blue, or blue and green, and one decorated with monochrome, bichrome, or polychrome luster. Occasionally the two treatments are combined in pieces decorated with luster and green (*Victoria and Albert Museum Annual Review*, 1930, pp. 14-15, fig. 8; 1934, pp. 8, 9) or luster and blue (fragment from Ctesiphon, in the Metropolitan, 32.150.123). Both these groups have been fully described, the pieces found at Samarra in Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, those at Susa in Koechlin, *Les Céramiques*. Other illuminating discussions of this material are in Kühnel, *Ars Islamica*, I, pp. 149-159; Pope, *Survey*, II, pp. 1487-1493; Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pp. 14-16.

The opaque white ware of Iraq decorated with blue or blue and green required two imported materials. The tin for opacifying the glaze was brought, so far as is known, from Syria (A. Lucas, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries*, London, 1934, pp. 212-213), even though it

existed near Kashan in Iran; and the cobalt used for the soft dark blue was imported from Iran or the Caucasus (*ibid.*, p. 218). It seems less likely that the cobalt came from Iran, if only because cobalt does not appear to have been used in Iran for ceramic decoration before the eleventh or twelfth century. It has been suggested (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, p. 14) that the use of cobalt was restricted to the factories of Iraq, few in number, that produced luster ware, and that these factories did not care to disclose their trade secrets. In any case, cobalt was not used in Nishapur in the ninth or tenth century, which fact reminds us that Nishapur, despite its known importance, neither equaled the seat of the caliphate as a center of fashion nor had the power to draw to itself the most valued and expert of Islamic potters.

Both groups of the Iraqi ware, which were probably not produced in separate factories, were well made and obviously not designed for the poor. A large export of the wares developed to Egypt, Spain, Syria, Iran, and Transoxiana. It is now known that luster ware, inspired by the Iraqi products, was made in Egypt (Schnyder, *Ars Orientalis*, V, pp. 49-78); that it was made in the ninth or tenth century in western Iran is doubtful. A number of the exported Iraqi pieces, decorated in blue and green, were found in Nishapur (1-6). This ware was eventually copied in Nishapur, but the copies do not attain the excellence of the imports. Although the potters of Khurasan in general and Nishapur in particular produced slip-painted vessels that to our eyes are the equal of the wares made in Iraq, the contemporary view in Iraq was otherwise. The flow of the ceramics, accordingly, was from Iraq to Iran, not the reverse.

The Nishapur potters, like those of Iraq, employed tin to opacify their glaze, but their sparing use of it, suggesting that it was difficult to obtain, resulted in glazes of poor quality. In place of the cobalt blue used in Iraq, the Nishapur potters used manganese, a poor substitute since it produced a near black rather than a dark blue. This same substitution, incidentally, was practiced elsewhere: in Rayy, Syria, and Egypt.

Green presented no problem to the Nishapur potters, since copper was at hand. However, it is to be noted that the green of the Nishapur vessels is less brilliant than that of the imports. Even the clay body of the Nishapur pieces is distinguishable from that of the Iraqi pieces, since it is coarser. Rarely yellow like the Iraqi body, it usually ranges from buff to red. The imported pieces are thinly turned and of good shape, with foot rings, even on small dishes. The Nishapur copies are thick and heavy, and there is little variation in their shape. The foot ring was a feature not copied; the bases of the local vessels are often flat or only slightly concave, and quite commonly they have a groove near the edge about five millimeters

wide. Occasionally there are two such grooves. Substituting for a foot ring, such grooves are also to be seen in other Nishapur wares: the buff and the opaque yellow.

Nishapur produced a variety of vessels in this ware, decorated in green or in green and near black: bowls, plates, jars, and small lamps. However, it appears that no attempt was made to reproduce the large thin platters (4) that were made in Iraq.

The Nishapur products can readily be distinguished from those of Afrasiyab, where a type evolved using small spots of green on the opaque white ground (Erdmann, *Faenza*, XXV, pls. xxviii h, xxix d, f). None of this ware was imported to Nishapur; not a fragment of it was found. The Nishapur products can be distinguished from the opaque white ware of Rayy not so much by its decoration as by the color of the Rayy black, which is brownish, and the color of the Rayy glaze, which is yellowish.

The decoration of the Nishapur pieces is usually simple, lacking the elegance of the imports. The bowls are decorated on the inside only. The green is usually applied in groups of streaks or single blobs that run from the rim toward the bottom. The potters made no attempt to copy the leafy forms, trees, or stylized patterns such as Solomon's seals, crosses, and tuliplike forms that adorn the imports. The black is used almost exclusively for the Kufic inscriptions, only approximations, that accompany the green streaks or blobs. In the best of the bowls there is a certain delicacy in the drawing of the "inscription," and even a near accuracy; in the poorest, the lettering deteriorates into a series of uprights and loops. The base line is used with inscriptions on the opaque ware of Iraq; thus it is not peculiar to Nishapur. A feature of the inscriptions on these Nishapur imitations (10, 20, 41) is that all the letters, contrary to usual calligraphic practice, are joined together by a connecting line at their base. See also an example in the black on white ware (Group 3, 23). Certain arrangements of script were not copied in Nishapur: for example, that in which the writing is formed into a central square (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. xviii, no. 3; Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 571). Also, no vessels were found with several lines of inscription across the center, such as were made in Iraq and imitated in Rayy, after the fashion of those shown in Pézard, *Céramique* (pl. cxii, lower). The Nishapur potters preferred to paint their inscriptions as a line extending from the rim toward the bottom. In many bowls one line of inscription is placed across the bottom; this is occasionally supplemented by two other lines at right angles on the sides (11). Some of these inscriptions resemble those to be seen in the opaque yellow ware (Group 7, 2, 3); in view of this, and the fact that the glazes of both wares contain tin, it is conceivable that they were produced in the same potteries.

A few exceptional pieces were discovered that may or may not have been made in Nishapur, among them some with inscriptions in green. One such (21) has an unusual plantlike form in black on the bottom. Although it would be wrong to assume that every unusual piece must necessarily be an import, the chance is that this one was not made in Nishapur. Another exceptional bowl (25) has part of its decoration in yellow, a color found on no other bowl of this particular group. Two other unusual pieces (22 and 27) are decorated in a dull grayish blue; pieces with a similar color have not come to light elsewhere.

Luster ware, the other type of opaque white ware exported in quantity from Iraq, is well represented in the finds at Nishapur. The controversy as to where in the Islamic world the technique was invented, and in what centers it was employed, continues. Nishapur can add nothing helpful to the search except her evidence that she did not make luster ware. She did, however, imitate it. Two techniques were used in the imitations. In one, the potters painted their designs upon an opaque white glaze that was notably poorer than that of their ware decorated in green and black. In the other, more often employed, the designs were painted upon a white engobe, after which a clear lead glaze was applied. Occasionally a little tin was added to this glaze, but so little that it caused only a milkiness. The type of luster ware most commonly copied in Nishapur was that decorated in monochrome, perhaps because of its relative simplicity. For this the potters used a thick application of green slip. Varying in hue and warmth, it can best be described as olive green. Containing a trace of chrome, it usually stains the glaze slightly yellow in its vicinity. This slip, which was not employed in Iraq or the west generally, also occurs on two other Nishapur wares, the polychrome on white and the ware with colored engobe. The same green, in conjunction with other colors, notably red, appears on ceramics of Khurasan, Gurgan, and Transoxiana. In combinations with other colors, the green is to be considered a development of underglaze slip-painted ware in general rather than an attempt to imitate luster ware.

The combination of white engobe, slip-painted decoration, and lead glaze does not make a very successful imitation of luster ware, inasmuch as no trace of metallic sheen or iridescence is produced. Nevertheless, the potters who exploited this combination—it was used in Afrasiyab even more than in Nishapur—often produced well-designed and pleasing decorations. It is frequently not possible to say of the pieces found in Nishapur that they were made there, or imported from Afrasiyab. Certain peculiarities of design in these pieces are reminiscent of the original luster ware. One such is the treatment of the leafy forms that connect with one another

rather than to a central stem (42), a form that first played a part in the decoration of tenth-century polychrome luster bowls (Kühnel, *Ars Islamica*, I, p. 148, fig. 1; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, II, pls. 86A, no. 26) and tiles (Bahgat & Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, pls. v, vi) but was more fully developed in the tenth century in the monochrome luster. Another copied motif was that of a bird with a leaf in its beak (45); for the original versions see Pézard, *Céramique*, pls. cxviii, cxix. The inscriptions of the luster ware are imitated fairly well even though they come close, at times, to being the pseudo inscriptions that the Nishapur potters used in their opaque white ware decorated in green and black. This form of pseudo writing is, in fact, not unknown in the original luster ware (Koechlin, *Les Céramiques*, pl. xxiii, no. 160; Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. xvi, no. 1). Minor details of monochrome luster ware also were copied, such as the fashion of drawing a thin line through small circular spots, the use of peacock eyes to fill such areas as birds' wings, and the filling of backgrounds with outlined areas containing spots. Half-moons at the rim, sometimes with linear additions, appear on both luster and imitation luster pieces. Certain peculiarities perhaps indicate the eastern origin of some of the pieces excavated in Transoxiana and Khurasan. The heavily outlined circles of 40 and the ovoid compartments of 41 are examples; both are common elements in the designs of Transoxiana.

The eastern potters, freeing themselves from making close copies of the originals, drew birds such as were never seen on any luster ware. Particularly strange are some with ruffled wings, appearing in heavily outlined circles (40). The circles are a feature of many pottery designs of Afrasiyab, but no bowls with birds like these have been found there. In addition to these peculiar birds, not encountered on any type of glazed earthenware made west of Khurasan, the potters of the imitation luster ware made use of birds, especially doves or pigeons (44), that resembled certain ones in monochrome luster ware closely (*Kunst Schätze aus Iran* Exhibition Catalogue, pl. 70). Unaccountably, other exceedingly common luster decorations were never copied in the east, despite the fact that the luster vessels were imported to Nishapur. A few sherds prove that they were imported to Afrasiyab also. Included in the group found in Nishapur are luster pieces with representations of human figures. In the matter of drawing, no attempt was made by the eastern imitators to scratch patterns through their olive green slip. This scratching technique was used by Egyptian potters

of the Fatimid period (969–1171) in making luster ware (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 26A; Bahgat & Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, pls. x–xii, xxi–xxiii, and others). In Nishapur and Afrasiyab this scratching technique was employed only in the black on white ware, polychrome on white ware, and slip-painted ware with colored engobe, all as made in the tenth century and perhaps the early eleventh.

Another form of luster ware apparently copied in Nishapur is that with bichrome decoration. Imitating this, the local potters employed a rich brownish slip and achieved a two-tone effect by staining the nearly colorless glaze, in selected areas, a clear, strong, warmish yellow (see Color Plate 8, page xix). The brownish slip is applied rather heavily on the white engobe so that it stands above the general surface. The effect somewhat resembles that type of bichrome luster ware of which a bowl in the Staatliche Museen, Berlin, is the outstanding example (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. xiii). The designs of the imitation ware feature outlined compartments filled with peacock eyes, dottings, and thick V-forms associated with thin curling lines (49–51). The last of these motifs is not to be seen on the luster productions of Iraq, and the only close resemblance to it, perhaps fortuitous, is on a bichrome luster bowl excavated at Hama, a bowl that may have been made in Raqqa (Ingholt, *Rapport préliminaire*, pl. xlvii, no. 2). It occurs, however, in Nishapur itself in another ware, the buff. Also included in the decoration of the imitation bichrome luster are plantlike forms and strongly stylized birds, both on a small scale. Crude simulations of the word *barakeh* (blessing) appear on some examples, for instance a Nishapur bowl the Metropolitan acquired by purchase (63.159.1). When the imitation bichrome luster bowls have flattish rims, these may be decorated with half-moons, a feature of luster bowls of Iraq beginning in the ninth century. The flat lip itself was a feature of opaque white wares of Iraq, and it also was copied in Nishapur in its opaque white ware imitations and its buff ware.

One other type of ware found in quantity in Nishapur can possibly be considered an imitation of luster ware. Forming a group related to, but not identical with, another employing the same technique at Afrasiyab, the ware is decorated with an underglaze painting in black that stains the glaze yellow. However, because a second black, nonstaining, plays an important role in the design, and sometimes even a red occurs, the ware is considered separately, as Group 8.

1 a,b BOWL

D 15, H 5 cm ; Tepe Madrasedh
MIB

Everted lip. Base has foot ring. Glaze distinctly gray, as is not uncommon in this ware. Overglaze decoration in strong blue. On the bottom, a cross potent in a Solomon's seal. The subsidiary triangles of the Solomon's seal are hatched. Extending from the six tips are pairs of L-shapes, back to back, linked with a semicircular stroke. These shapes give the effect, perhaps unintended, that the central figure is surrounded by six large petals. Imported, presumably from Iraq. Found in the lowest level of a ninth-century building, together with a buff ware bowl (Group 1, 7).

Triangles are a common feature in this type of bowl, appearing either superimposed in pairs, forming a Solomon's seal, as here and on a bowl from Susa (Koechlin, *Les Céramiques*, pl. XII, no. 84), or singly, with the tips hatched, as on another Susa bowl (*ibid.*, pl. XII, no. 92). Hatching fills the triangular corners of a figure made of two squares on a ninth-century opaque white ware bowl from Iraq (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 8A); a similar figure occurs on a bowl from Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. XX, no. 3). The pairs of L-shapes, with or without the connecting link, appear on a number of bowls, including the two from Susa mentioned above, and also, with a link, on a piece from Antioch (Waage, *Antioch-on-the-Orontes*, IV, part 1, fig. 53, no. 2). In a stubbier version, without the link, they occur on two polychrome on white ware bowls found in Nishapur (Group 4, 30, 50).

2 BOWL FRAGMENT

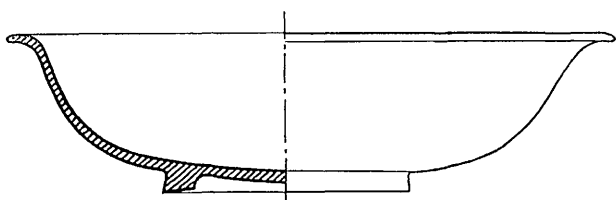
D 21.3, H 5.8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Base has a foot ring. Overglaze decoration in blue. In the center, repeated, a word in Kufic, perhaps intended to be *ghabteh* (well-being). Around the rim, freely drawn half-moons enclosed in double contoured lines with spots added at the junctions. An import.

The inscription *ghabteh* appears on similar bowls found elsewhere, for example, on a bowl from Susa (David-Weill, *Musées de France*, May, 1950, p. 86, fig. 9) and on a bowl from Rayy (Pézar, *Céramique*, pl. CIX, top right).

3 BOWL

D 21.5, H 6.2 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.6



1:3

Soft, sandy, yellow body, eroded glaze. Foot ring. Decoration: three leaflike forms in blue spaced around a central spot. Very different from the usual Islamic palmette, these forms are drawn in an almost Chinese manner. An imported piece. The softness of the body may be due to disintegration; a fragment of a similar piece from Ctesiphon in the Metropolitan (32.150.122) has a hard body. Bowls of similar shape, with similar decoration, have also been found at Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. XVIII, no. 4). One of uncertain origin is illustrated in Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 573 C. Fragments of similar bowls were found in Nishapur as well as a complete bowl of the same shape but without decoration, the latter now in the Teheran museum. All of these were imports with a hard yellowish body. Some, like their Chinese models, had raised "rays" on the interior.

4 FRAGMENT

H 17, W 11.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.461

Part of a dish or platter of large size and fine quality. Hard yellowish body, slightly gray glaze. Despite the close resemblance of this body to that found in the wares of Hamadan, analysis shows a clear distinction. Upturned rim. Base glazed. No foot ring. Decoration: a Kufic inscription in blue, saying [*'a*]ml Ibrahim (made by Ibrahim). Probably there was no other decoration. An import from Iraq. A fragment of an opaque white ware bowl from Ctesiphon, bearing the inscription *'aml Ibrah[im]* is in the Metropolitan (32.150.92).

5 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 5.7 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

Foot ring present. Decoration in blue: a tuliplike form flanked by a sprig of trilobed leaves. An imported piece. Similar tuliplike forms occur on pieces from Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, fig. 99; Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, XIV, p. 14, fig. 14). The conjunction of conventional forms and naturalistic foliage, exemplified on 5, was popular in Iraqi ninth-century polychrome luster pottery (Pézar, *Céramique*, pl. CXXXIII, lower; Kühnel, *Ars Islamica*, I, p. 155, fig. 3; Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 11B). This type of design, however, was not copied in Nishapur.

6 BOWL FRAGMENT

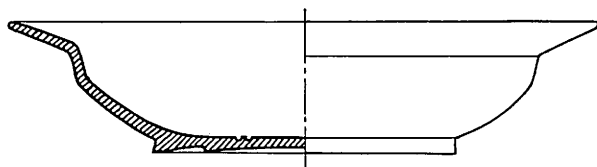
H 5.7 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.460

Low foot ring, typical of this ware as found in Iraq. Body almost white, of a type not used in Nishapur. A splash of green (at right in illustration) obliterates the beginning of a Kufic inscription in blue. An import. Few pieces with

decoration in both blue and green were found in Nishapur and none were of considerable size.

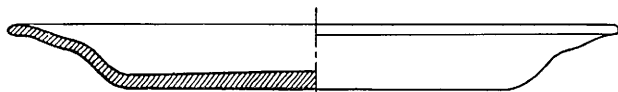
7 DISH

D 21.5, H 4.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB



1:3

Coarse reddish body. Base has bevel at edge. Glaze, unevenly applied, is scant on tin, so not really opaque. Decoration: blobs of green on the everted rim and a spot of green on the bottom. Probably made in Nishapur. Fragments of similar dishes found in the excavations indicate that some were decorated with groups of three green strokes at the rim, somewhat in the manner of 10. Some had the beveled base of 7, others plain bases, such as one

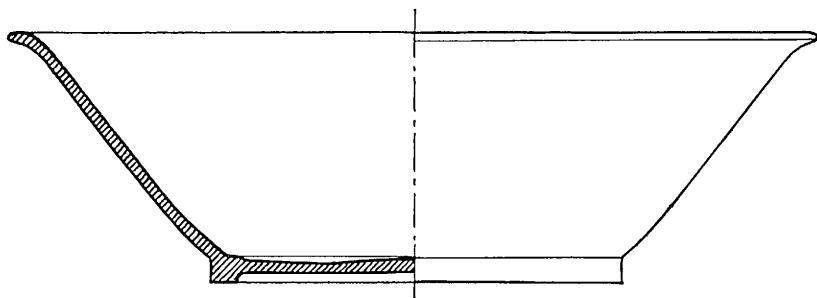


1:3

from Sabz Pushan. One had two narrow grooves around the bottom; see 10 for a single such groove.

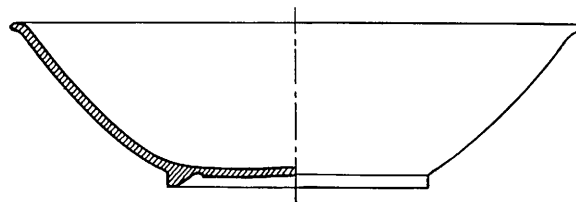
8 BOWL

D 31.5, H 4.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.91

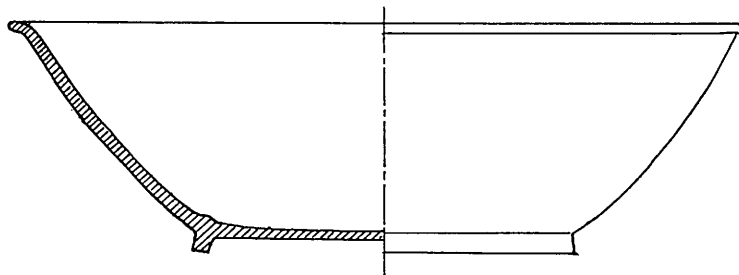


1:3

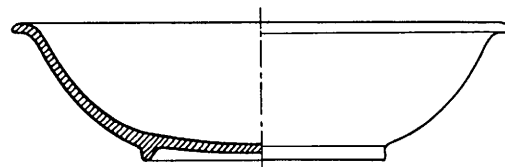
A ninth-century copy, probably imported from the west, of Chinese ware. Yellowish buff body, cold white glaze. Rather thick walls, everted rim, properly made foot ring. On the interior five raised "rays" extend from the bottom to the rim. There is no suggestion of a groove at the junction of wall and bottom, even though such a groove was quite common in several wares of Iraq and eastern Iran in the ninth century. It occurs in a bowl resembling



1:3



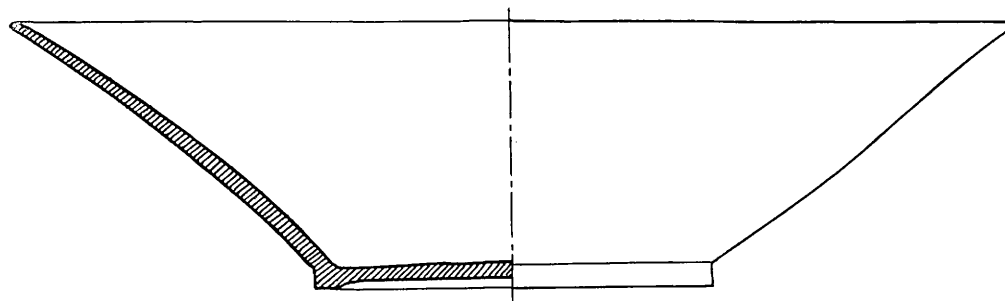
1:3



1:3

8, found in the excavations, in the Teheran museum. This bowl, likewise probably an import, has a hard yellowish body unlike that of 8 and a creamy white rather than a cold white glaze. Fragments of one or two other bowls, better potted than 8, but having this hard yellowish body and creamy white glaze, were found. Two examples also from Tepe Madraseh and now in the Teheran museum

are shown in the drawings here, as well as an example from Sabz Pushan. As can be seen, the shapes vary considerably. Furthermore, fragments of actual Chinese pieces with raised "rays" were found in Nishapur (Group 10, 1-3, 6). A small bowl resembling 8 found at al-Mina, Syria (Lane, *Archaeologia*, LXXXVII, pl. xvi, fig. 2) is considered by Lane to be an import from Iraq.



1:3

9 BOWL

D 39, H 11 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Buff body. Poorly potted, rim uneven. Base slightly concave. Glaze has run to one side, showing that the vessel was tilted in the kiln. Decoration: three groups of green strokes on the wall, run together, and a green blob on the bottom. No other bowl quite like this was found. Probably an import.

11 BOWL

D 32, H 10.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Yellow body. Green splashes, more or less evenly spaced, once decorated the rim; these have mostly disintegrated. In the center, forming a cross, are three lines of pseudo inscription in black, one traversing the bottom, the others at right angles on opposite walls. Irregular in form, the letters have triply divided finials. Locally manufactured. The letters, some of which have been reversed, are probably a poor version of an inscription to be seen in the black on white ware (Group 3, 14).

10 BOWL

D 32, H 9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.13

Reddish buff body. On the base, in lieu of a foot ring, two concentric grooves. Everted rim, a characteristic feature of Nishapur's imitations of Iraqi opaque white ware bowls. A groove encircles the bottom. Decoration: five groups of green streaks descend from the rim, and two radial lengths of pseudo inscription, one upside down in relation to the other, appear on opposite walls. The inscriptions have no meaning, unlike those of imported pieces, which are usually legible (4), and they are in black rather than blue—still another sign of local manufacture. Even though the inscriptions are simulated, various decorative features used in proper writing are present, such as an added slanting stroke at the top of the verticals (here somewhat exaggerated), dottings on the horizontals, and arrowlike marks. These arrowlike marks are a feature of the pseudo writing in the opaque yellow ware (Group 7, 3, 4, 5) and can also be seen in the luster ware above the letter *sad* (Kühnel, *Ars Islamica*, I, p. 156, fig. 7). Probably ninth century.

12 BOWL

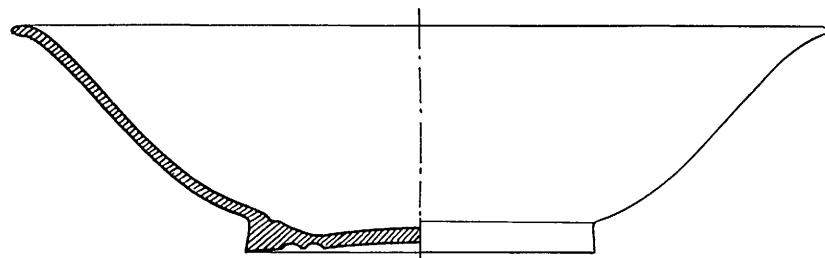
D 20.3, H 6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.75

Reddish body. Everted rim. Four groups of green streaks at the rim, a pseudo inscription in black across the bottom. The script is poorly executed, with parts of the "letters" floating above the base line, giving them the appearance of being drawn in reverse. Locally made. One of many bowls with a single line of "inscription" on the bottom.

13 BOWL

D 21, H 6.5 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Yellowish body. Decoration: green splashes, roughly triangular, spaced around the rim, and an indecipherable radial inscription in black on one wall; as on 12, the inscription gives the impression of being in mirror writing. The use of black rather than blue in the inscription and the poor quality of the glaze both indicate local



1:3

manufacture. Although the yellowish body is less common than the reddish, wasters from the Nishapur kilns confirm that yellow-bodied wares were made there.

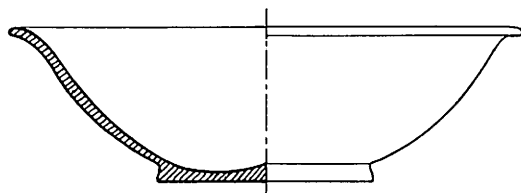
14 BOWL (minor restoration)

D 20.7, H 6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.164

Buff body. Carelessly made, with several irregular grooves on interior surface (one visible in the illustration, midway between the inscription and the strokes at the rim). Base has a wide groove near the edge. Glaze, sparsely applied, suffers from a paucity of tin. Decoration: three groups of green strokes at the rim (badly disintegrated) and a radial inscription in black. More ornamental than usual, and better executed than most on these locally made bowls, it consists of the word *barakeh* (blessing).

15 BOWL

D 20.7, H 5.8 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 39.40.9



1:3

Reddish body. Flat, grooveless base. Decoration: five groups of green streaks descending from the rim and a radial "inscription" in black. Locally manufactured. The style of writing, with an arrowlike mark placed above the horizontal letter (compare 10), is similar to that on some of the opaque yellow ware with decoration in green (Group 7, 2-4). The exaggerated sloping added strokes at the top of the verticals also appear in both groups (Group 7, 3, 4). As 15 and a number of opaque yellow pieces were found in the same low-level pit, a date of the ninth century is indicated.

16 BOWL

D 20.5, H 6.3 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.109

Reddish body. Base has a groove near the edge. Decoration: small splashes of green around the rim and a crudely drawn radial pseudo inscription in black. Locally manufactured. Bowls with similar splashes of green were not rare.

17 BOWL

D 19.5, H 5.7 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Reddish body with core redder than surface. Decoration: four single splashes of green at the rim and a radial pseudo inscription in black. Locally manufactured. It seems likely that similar vessels in Group 7 were also locally made, although the calligraphy is not identical.

18 BOWL

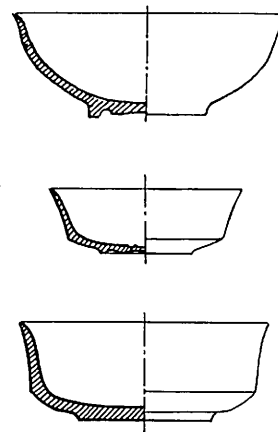
D 18.5, H 7 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Buff body. Decoration: five splashes of green at the rim, a spot of green on the bottom, and a radial pseudo inscription in black. Locally manufactured. Doubtless by the same hand that decorated 10, since the tops of the verticals in the inscriptions have the same exaggerated added strokes. However, a triangle takes the place of the "arrow" on the horizontal stroke.

19 BOWL

D 23.8, H 7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Buff body. Five splashes of green at rim and green spot on bottom (compare 18) and a debased, meaningless radial "inscription" in black. Locally manufactured. A few very small bowls of this ware—of different shape, usually with a rim rather than a lip like 19—were found. These were decorated with green splashes but without inscriptions:



1:3

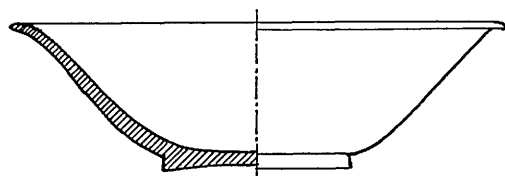
20 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 22.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.424

Part of a large bowl with flaring sides, perhaps shaped like 9. Yellow body. Decoration: green streaks and a radial "inscription" painted in a clear purple. Fired inverted, the glaze of the streaks accumulating at the rim. The "inscription," treated more as a simple decoration than others in this group, is in a style not repeated in this ware or any other ware found in Nishapur. Furthermore, this is the only example of an opaque white ware bowl with an inscription in purple. Most likely an import.

21 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 22.2 cm ; Vineyard Tepe
MIB



1:3

Although nothing about the body or glaze is unusual for Nishapur, the decoration, consisting of two leafy forms painted in outline, back to back, and a radial "inscription" in unusual style, painted in green rather than black, suggests that the piece was an import.

22 FRAGMENT

W 16.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.523

A portion of this fragment is in Teheran. Reddish body. A green blob at the rim and an inscription, base toward the rim, in a dull grayish blue. Quite unlike the strong blue to be seen on such indubitable imports as 1-6, this color is rare in Nishapur, 27 being the only other example found. Place of manufacture uncertain.

The inscription reads:

اجل و ثواب

"[at the] end, reward [praise]." which is apparently part of the formula:

لكل اجل كتاب و لكل عمل ثواب

"Each existence has its predestination and each act its consequence."

23 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 11.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.60

Part of a large bowl with everted rim. Gritty yellowish body. Decoration: streaks of opaque white, some of which are straight and regular, others not, and painting in a strong, clear purple. Possibly the design consisted of a purple cross defined by narrow white lines, with indefinite marblings filling the areas between the arms. The exterior is covered with a patternless mixture of opaque white and a nearly black purple. No similar piece was found. Doubtless an import. The decoration seems to resemble that of a Nishapur color-splashed bowl (Group 2, 11) and a color-splashed bowl from Samarra (Hobson, *Islamic Pottery*, fig. 13). There is an even closer resemblance to a

color-splashed jar found in Fustat, Egypt, now in the Benaki Museum, Athens (unpublished). It is possible that both 23 and this jar were made in Iraq.

24 JAR FRAGMENT

H 10.1 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.425

On the inside (not illustrated) the glaze is so thinly applied that the red of the body shows through. On the outside it is applied unevenly, the color varying from reddish to white according to the thickness. Decoration: splashes of green and a tree drawn in purplish black, the trunk and leaves colored green. The same tree motif occurs on a buff ware bowl made in Nishapur (Group 1, 73), suggesting that the present piece may also be of local make.

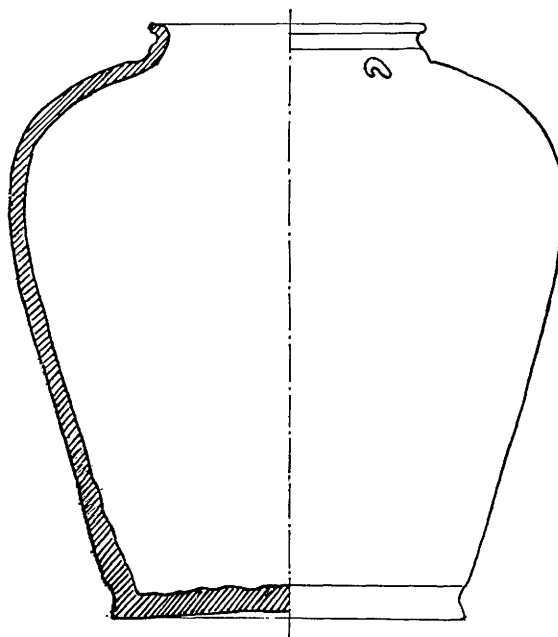
25 BOWL

D 22.2, H 7.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Body and glaze like those of other locally manufactured pieces. All the decoration, on the other hand, is unusual. The meaningless "inscription" descending from the rim is in green (compare 21) rather than the customary black. On the bottom, drawn in black outline, a pair of Kufic letters, connected and repeated. On the wall opposite the green inscription, a unique design consisting of a series of curved lines in yellow with green spots painted upon them. No other opaque white ware bowl found in Nishapur had any of its decoration in yellow; yellow, however, appears occasionally in the opaque white ware of Samarra (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, p. 13). The two groups of curved strokes at the rim of 25, perhaps a vestigial form of the border motif seen on 2, are in green. Place of origin uncertain.

26 JAR

H 26.6 cm, D 22.4; Tepe Madraseh
Discarded



1:3

Gritty yellow body. Glaze, almost completely disintegrated, possibly once had some green splashes upon it. Interior glazed. On the shoulder, three small curved lugs (one barely visible on the right in the illustration). Ninth century. Probably imported from Iraq. The only opaque white ware jar found. Similar lugs occur on opaque yellow ware jars. They are also to be seen, in larger form, on a ninth-century opaque white ware jar with blue and green decoration found in Susa, now in the Metropolitan (32.149). A jar of the same shape with lugs standing free was found in Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, fig. 146); this jar, splashed with green, is considered to be a copy of Oriental stoneware.

27 BOWL

D 20.2, H 6.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.88

Reddish buff body. Poorly made. Covering the base, the glaze caused the piece to stand unevenly. Glaze now badly disintegrated. Decoration: three blobs of green at the rim and a radial "inscription" in the same grayish blue seen on 22, for which reason it is probable that the two pieces came from the same factory. Were it not for this rare color, there would be no reason to suspect that either piece was made anywhere but in Nishapur.

28 a,b BOWL FRAGMENT

W 14.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.457c

A portion of this fragment is in Teheran. Part of a large ninth-century polychrome lustered bowl imported from Iraq. Hard, pale greenish yellow body. Opaque white glaze with luster decoration on interior in sienna yellow, reddish brown, and umber. At the rim, a wreath of closely placed leaves growing from a very thin stem. Below this, a second border with reserve ovals and tiny triangles. The center decoration fragmentary. On the exterior (28b), a reddish oval, hatched, and a background hatching in salmon pink. The combination of careful drawing on the interior and loose treatment on the exterior is customary in ninth-century polychrome luster ware (compare 29).

29 a,b BOWL FRAGMENT

W 9.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.457e

A ninth-century polychrome luster piece imported from Iraq. Pale grayish yellow body. Thinly turned, with well-made foot ring. Glaze distinctly gray. Colors on interior, yellowish green, yellow brown, reddish brown; on exterior (29b), yellow and dark red. Decoration on interior: a variety of outlined shapes containing herringbone, peacock eyes, and other devices, and an inverted cone shape more or less solidly filled in. Exterior: broad strokes,

freely applied. There is the same contrast between the decoration of the interior and exterior noted at 28. According to Kühnel, who divided the luster ware of the Abbasid period into several distinct groups, 29 should be dated to about 860 (Kühnel, *Ars Islamica*, I, p. 148, fig. 2).

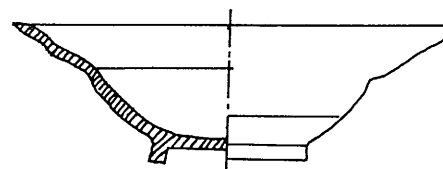
30 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 8.4 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.457g

Part of a large ninth-century polychrome lustered bowl from Iraq. Compact yellow body. The glaze, which has hairline cracks, is less opaque than it is on monochrome luster pieces found in Nishapur (34–39); it is thus warmer, closer to ivory than to true white. Colors on the interior (illustrated), yellow, brown, and dark near green; on the exterior, blobs of sienna yellow. At the rim is a unique border consisting of groups of three spots arranged to form triangles, pointing alternately up and down. The rest of the interior was apparently divided into a variety of outlined shapes after the fashion of 29, some filled with peacock eyes, some with small V-shapes.

31 DISH

D 11.7, H 3.4 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB



1:2

Yellowish body. Properly turned foot ring, flattened rim. Pure white glaze. No decoration, though one would expect a vessel of this type to be decorated with polychrome luster. Probably imported from Iraq.

32 BOWL

D 12.6, H 4.7 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Reddish body, pure white engobe, colorless glaze, no decoration. A piece of fine quality, attempting to duplicate the effect of such pieces as 31. The whiteness achieved with a white engobe and colorless glaze surpassed that produced with the opaque white glaze used in Nishapur. Bowls such as this were rare.

33 BOWL

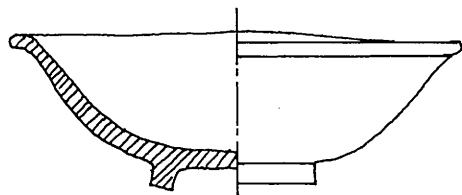
D 13.5, H 5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

A ninth-century bichrome luster piece from Iraq. Yellowish body. Opaque white glaze, now in poor condition. The

luster colors are yellow and brown. Decoration: a tree, extending from rim to rim, flanked by winglike motifs filled with peacock eyes and dots. On either side of the tree, a rosette composed of circular spots contained within a reserved white circle. The exterior of the bowl is decorated with slanting strokes of luster. Similar winglike forms filled with peacock eyes, and having the same darkening of the curling tips, appear on the exterior of a deep, luster-decorated bowl from Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. xvi, lower). Such forms are clearly descended from a favorite Sasanian motif, a pair of wings. A ninth-century polychrome luster bowl from Iraq in the Metropolitan (41.165.1) has the motif placed near the top of a tree instead of at the bottom (Dimand, *Handbook*, fig. 103).

34 BOWL

D 11.8, H 3.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.27



1:2

A tenth-century monochrome luster piece, probably from Iraq. The colors on the opaque white glaze vary from greenish to sienna yellow. Decoration: a human figure holding a flask and an unidentified object, the background filled with dotted compartments. The drawing of the figure conforms to that on monochrome luster vessels found at Rayy, Samarra, and Fustat, among other sites. Similar long-tailed headdresses, for example, occur on a bowl in the *Erickson Exhibition Catalogue*, p. 24, no. 2, a bowl in the Staatliche Museen, Berlin, and a fragment found in Fustat (Bahgat & Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, pl. II, no. 7). The treatment of the eyes and nose on the Fustat fragment is very close to that on 34, suggesting a common origin. The flask depicted on 34 is of a shape popular in glass in many places (2000 *Jahre persisches Glas* Exhibition Catalogue, no. 87; C. J. Lamm, *Das Glas von Samarra*, Berlin, 1928, pl. v, no. 188); cut-glass bottles found in Nishapur were of this shape (Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, January, 1943, p. 181; 40.170.129). The dotted background and the rim decoration of half-moons are typical of monochrome luster ware bowls, and the two peculiar shapes intruding from the rim, possibly simply devices to balance the design, are also to be seen on other monochrome luster pieces. The decoration on the exterior of 34, now very faint, resembles that of 35. Such imports were not copied in Nishapur. The drawing of the human figures in the Nishapur buff ware is conspicuously different, particularly in the poses and the headdresses.

35 a,b BOWL

D 12, H 4.75 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

A tenth-century monochrome luster piece, probably from Iraq. The luster is coppery. The interior decoration features a ducklike bird within a circle. From this circle five square forms in reserve rise toward the rim; within each is a square in outline, filled with V-shaped spots. The streaming crest seen on this bird, not duplicated on any of the birds found on Nishapur-made wares, may be a degenerate survival of the streamers that were attached to the necks of Sasanian animals. This is suggested by the fact that long and quite unrealistic crests not only appear on birds in monochrome luster ware (*Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, fig. 3; Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 577; Pézard, *Céramique*, pl. cxiv) but on animals (Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 578). The decoration on the exterior (35b), typical of monochrome luster ware, consists of a circle containing a group of spots, alternating with a cluster of spots superimposed on curling hairlines. The latter motif seems to have been imitated in Khurasan and Transoxiana. A version related to it, in that it has supplementary V's, occurs in the interior decoration of some bichrome luster ware imitations (49–51) probably made in Nishapur. The Nishapur version also occurs in the buff ware (Group 1, 43, 46, among others).

36 FRAGMENT

W 10.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.4571

Monochrome luster ware. Probably tenth century. Probably made in Iraq. Pale yellowish body. Brilliant opaque white glaze. Gold luster faded to greenish yellow. Decoration: the bases of what are probably three pairs of leaves emerge from a trefoil in reserve; between each pair appears an Arabic word or words; within the trefoil are three simple leaves and subsidiary curls. On the exterior: forms similar to the leaves on the interior. On the base, which has a foot ring, a circle with a portion of what was perhaps an inscription. Closely related pieces have been found in Fustat (Bahgat & Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, pl. vi, no. 6), Susa (Koechlin, *Les Céramiques*, pl. xxiii, no. 161), and Syria (Lane, *Archaeologia*, LXXXVII, pl. xvi, fig. 1, to right of E).

37 a,b FRAGMENT

W 15.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.234

Tenth-century monochrome luster ware. Pale yellow body, brilliant opaque white glaze, decoration in gold luster. The interior decoration, consisting of inscriptions and bold forms with smaller designs inserted in the spaces between them, closely resembles that of 36. The exterior

decoration (37b), less massive, is composed of Kufic lettering surrounded by patterns drawn in outline.

In an article by Marilyn Jenkins in the *Journal of the American Research Center in Cairo*, 7, 1968, pp. 119–126, this piece is indicated as being manufactured in Susa (ibid., pl. v, figs. 9, 10, and p. 123). This is an ingenious suggestion, but there does not seem to be any reason to support the affirmation. It is far more likely that the piece was made in Iraq and imported from there, especially as a very similar piece was found in Babylon (Wetzel, Schmidt & Mallwitz, *Das Babylon der Spätzeit*, pl. 49, no. 1). It is also stated by Miss Jenkins: "that tenth-century Nishapur ware was found at Susa is a well established fact," but the reference given (Koechlin, *Les Céramiques*, pl. xiv) ascribes the piece to Afrasiyab (ibid., no. 109, p. 70 and also on p. 64). An examination of excavated pieces from Susa in the Louvre and in the Musée Céramique in Sevres shows conclusively that none of the slip-painted ware, any more than the cover (ibid., 109), came from Nishapur itself, even though it may have come from other areas.

38 RIM FRAGMENT

W 9.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Tenth-century monochrome luster ware from Iraq. Color: yellowish green gold. Decoration: a Kufic inscription, base toward the rim, consisting of the word *barakeh* (blessing), repeated; half-moons at rim.

39 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Tenth-century monochrome luster ware, probably from Iraq. Yellow body, pure white opaque glaze, yellowish green luster. Base has a high foot ring. Decoration: a large bird, its tail adorned with dots and peacock eyes, dotted compartments filling the background. Half-moons at rim. In some examples of this ware peacock eyes are used as an allover pattern (Pope, *Survey*, V, pls. 575 D, 576 B).

40 a,b BOWL

D 33.5, H 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

An imitation of monochrome luster ware probably made in Transoxiana. Reddish body, white engobe, decoration in olive green slip, colorless glaze. The slip painting yellows the glaze in its vicinity. Certain motifs and details are reproduced from the luster ware models, but this is by no means a slavish copy. The division of the interior design into boldly drawn circles and bands is a characteristic of Transoxiana and is not found in any true monochrome luster ware. The birds within the circles are

drawn in a peculiarly mannered way, their tails turned down at right angles and made to descend lower than their feet. The filling of their wings with peacock eyes is reminiscent of the luster ware models (compare 33, 39), but the strange ruffled outlines of the wings are unique. The motif that fills the triangular compartments outside the circles, a spot superimposed on a hairline, is again reminiscent of true monochrome luster ware (compare 35). In the radial bands the word *barakeh* (blessing), written neatly in Kufic, is repeated. Above the *kaf* is an arrowlike shape that occurs in other inscriptions in this group of monochrome luster imitations, as well as the Nishapur opaque white ware decorated with green and black (10, 15) and the Nishapur opaque yellow ware (Group 7, 2–4). The present inscription is unlike the others mentioned in that it is not drawn on a base line. The half-palmettes that decorate the exterior (40b), here drawn in outline, are more usually painted solid on the luster ware originals (Baghat & Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, pl. vi, no. 8).

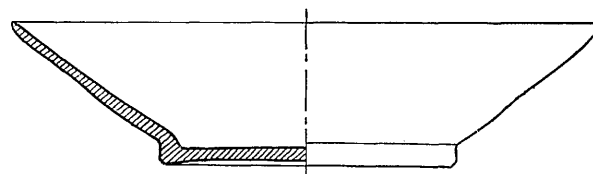
41 a,b BOWL

D 26.2, H 8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Red body, white engobe, slip painting in olive green in imitation of monochrome luster, colorless glaze. Base slightly concave. Decoration: ovoid panels in reserve around the wall, each one containing an "inscription" neatly drawn upon a base line. A similar "inscription" crosses the bottom. Such simulated writing, common in the Nishapur opaque white vessels decorated in green and black (10–20), and also found in the black on white ware (Group 3, 50) and the polychrome on white (Group 4, 39), does not occur on lustered pottery. The exterior decoration (41b), contrary to the case in 40, is markedly inferior in drawing to that of the interior. Not really imitating designs seen on luster ware, it consists of a circle filled with simple spots alternating with a V containing a vertical stroke. Place of manufacture uncertain, even though the ovoid panels and general simplicity of the design suggest eastern Iran or Transoxiana.

42 BOWL

D 23.7, H 6.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.36



1:3

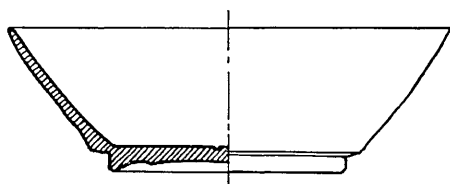
Red body, white engobe, decoration in thick olive green

slip in imitation of monochrome luster, colorless glaze. Around the rim is a band shaped into four lobes with ogee tops. Filling two of the lobes on opposite sides of the bowl are "leaves" in pairs, their tips having pointed extensions that reach to the center of the bowl. The triangular space within the figure is filled by a curling stem ending in a three-pointed leaf. The other two lobes contain a radial inscription, the word *barakeh* (blessing), with a distinctive dotted circle added on the final letter (compare 43).

The leaflike forms are related to those of tenth-century gold-lustered pieces found in Egypt, one of which is in the Metropolitan (63.16.3; Grube, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, February, 1965, p. 214, fig. 8). For another example see Bahgat & Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, pl. v. It is probable that this type of design originated in Iraq, where similar pieces of fine quality have been found. A fragment of this type, probably from Iraq, found in Nishapur, is in the Metropolitan (40.170.457h). The pieces found in Egypt have the characteristics of body and luster indicating local manufacture. No examples of these Egyptian pieces were found in Nishapur.

43 BOWL

D 17.5, H 5.8 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.140



1:3

Reddish body, white engobe, olive green slip painting in imitation of monochrome luster, colorless glaze. Base concave with groove near edge. At the rim, half-moons. Around the wall, a band of curiously stubby leaves and an undulating stem. There is a resemblance in this band to gold-lustered pieces found in Fustat (Bahgat & Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, pl. c, no. 27), but the resemblance is not so close that direct copying can be assumed; the leaves on the Egyptian examples, though stubby, do not have the projecting line at the tip. This leafy band also forms the principal decoration of bowls discovered in recent digging at Afrasiyab (Pachos, *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*, 1, 1967, p. 68, fig. 4). It is notable that the bowl from Afrasiyab has a silhouette not characteristic of the bowls of Nishapur. Across the bottom of

43 is the word *barakeh* (blessing), in the style seen on 42 and with the same dotted circle on the final letter, perhaps indicating manufacture in the same shop.

44 a,b BOWL FRAGMENTS

W as assembled 39.5 cm ; Vineyard Tepe
MIB

Reddish body, white engobe, painting in a yellow-staining green in imitation of monochrome luster, colorless glaze. Thinly turned. Around the wall, a procession of pigeons, crested male and crestless female alternating. Drawn, curiously enough, without feet (compare bird on 47). They are painted solid except for their collars and tail bands, which are left in reserve and ornamented, and their wings, which are filled with dots and peacock eyes. At the rim, between each pair of birds, is a cone shape, painted solid, a device that occasionally appears in true monochrome luster ware (Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, XIV, p. 14, fig. 16). The spaces between the birds are filled with outlined shapes containing dots. The design on the exterior (44b), consisting of short lines and dots in compartments bounded by outlined biconvex forms in reserve, was copied from imported luster ware. A similar piece decorated with pigeons, found in Afrasiyab, has not been published.

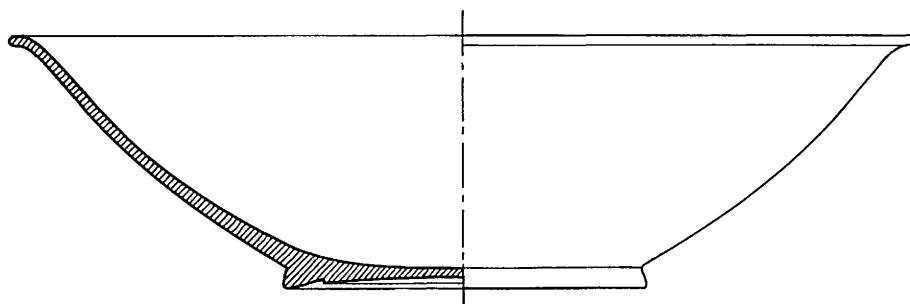
45 FRAGMENT

H 14 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

An imitation of monochrome luster ware, doubtless made either in Khurasan or Transoxiana. Decoration: a crested bird holding a half-palmette in its beak, its tail (?) filled with dots and peacock eyes. At the rim, a developed version of the pattern that occurs on 2; see 2 for discussion of this pattern. The placing of spots between the elements of the half-palmette, as seen on 45, also occurs on gold luster ware found in Fustat (Bahgat & Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, pl. III, no. 2). For a complete bowl, undoubtedly made in Khurasan or Transoxiana, with similar birds holding palmettes in their beaks, see Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, X, fig. 5 and p. 9.

46 a,b BOWL

D of bowl 36, H 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.625



1:3

Red body, white engobe, painting in olive green slip in imitation of monochrome luster ware, colorless glaze. The slip yellows the glaze locally. Base: beveled, slightly concave, turned very thin at center. Rim everted, reminiscent

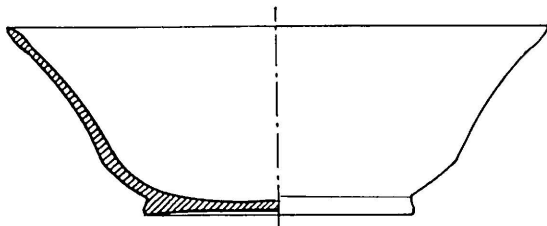


of 35. Interior decoration: four large petal-shaped compartments filled with Kufic inscriptions, the spaces between the compartments filled with leaflike forms. Three words appear in the compartments; starting at the bottom: *barakeh* (blessing), *we yumn* (and happiness), and an undeciphered word at the top. The style of writing, with its heavily foliated tops, is not peculiar to imitation luster pieces; it also occurs, a little less elaborately, in the black on white ware (Group 3, 63). The decoration between the compartments is closely related to that found on true monochrome luster ware, particularly in the pairs of links between the leaves. A less exaggerated version occurs on a tenth-century luster piece found at Fustat, a fragment of which is in the Metropolitan (08.256.342). The decoration on the exterior of 46, a band of herringbone and loosely drawn pear shapes, is not found on true luster ware. It is an invention of Khurasan or Transoxiana.

47 BOWL (some restoration)

D 21.4, H 7.4 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.205

Pale grayish yellow body, white engobe, painting in greenish slip in imitation of monochrome luster. The slip,



containing chrome, locally yellows the glaze, which is slightly opaque. Base slightly concave. The major element of the decoration is a bird with a remarkably small head. It resembles others in this green-slip-painted ware in that its wing is filled with dots and peacock eyes (40, 45), in that



1:3

it lacks feet (44), and in that it holds a half-palmette in its beak (45, 48). A carefree treatment of the half-palmette is also seen in ware decorated with yellow-staining black (Group 8, 29). A link to still another Nishapur ware is to be seen in the drawing of the two animal heads, one of which has a half-palmette in place of horns; similar animals occur in the buff ware. The rim decoration consists of half-moons supplemented by contour lines. On the exterior, halfway down, are some splashes of greenish slip and at the bottom some rough strokes of slip. Made in Khurasan or Transoxiana.

48 FRAGMENT

W 16.5 cm ; Tepe Madrasch
MMA 40.170.540

A portion of this fragment is in Teheran. Red body, white engobe, drawing in greenish brown in imitation of monochrome luster. Glaze disintegrated. Decoration: birds and animals, with outlined compartments containing dots and peacock eyes filling background. The birds hold half-leaves in their beaks. The one seen at the right, resembling the bird on 45, holds a half-leaf with a circular detail on a stem, a device of the tenth century. The bird at the upper left wears a collar; from this there descends a curved band in reserve, ending in a leaflike bifurcation. Similar bands decorate the bodies of many birds and animals in the buff ware. The small crosses that decorate the body of the animal constitute another link with the buff ware (compare Group 1, 77, 79). In view of these associations, 48 may have been made in Nishapur. Otherwise, probably Merv or Afrasiyab.

1:3

49 a,b BOWL (restored)

D 24, H 8.2 cm ; Falaki

MMA 38.40.228

Imitation bichrome luster ware. Reddish body, white engobe, colorless glaze. Base slightly concave, with two concentric narrow grooves. Some glaze on base. Drawing in brown slip with added staining in brownish yellow. Around the wall, compartments of irregular shape, formed by outlined bands that are either straight or triple curved, recalling one of the treatments in the buff ware (Group 1, 41). The bottom is divided into four compartments by means of one straight and two curved bands. Half the compartments are filled with a pattern of thin curling lines supplemented by spots and V-shaped "leaves," a pattern frequently encountered in the buff ware (Group 1, 30, 41–44, 46). The alternate compartments on 49, filled with dots and peacock eyes, are the areas that are stained brownish yellow. The exterior (49b) is decorated with ovals containing vertical lines, alternating with a vertical line. A variation of this pattern occurs on a closely related opaque white ware bowl from Nishapur, perhaps made in the same pottery, in the Metropolitan (63.159.1; Grube, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, February, 1965, p. 212, figs. 5, 6). Probably made in Nishapur, 49 is of the tenth century. Similarities in drawing and the use of the same filling patterns suggest that 50 and 51 are from the same pottery.

50 BOWL (restored)

D 20.5, H 6.2 cm ; Vineyard Tepe

MMA 38.40.135

(Color Plate 8, page xix)

Imitation bichrome luster ware. Reddish body, white engobe, colorless glaze. The engobe and glaze cover the entire piece, including the base. The exterior is undecorated. The bowl has a flat rim, exceptional in the copies of bichrome luster ware found in Nishapur. Base slightly concave. Drawing in brown slip, with added staining in

brownish yellow. *Alef*-like radii divide the decoration into quadrants. These in turn are divided by bands with a double curve (compare triple-curved bands on 49). Even more than 49, the present bowl recalls some of the buff ware (Group 1, 41, 42). Around the rim is a pattern of half-moons with added strokes. This pattern, a version of the rim decorations on such bowls as 2 and 45, is also to be seen on the related Nishapur bowl cited at 49. 50 is probably from the same pottery as 49 and 51.

51 BOWL (restored)

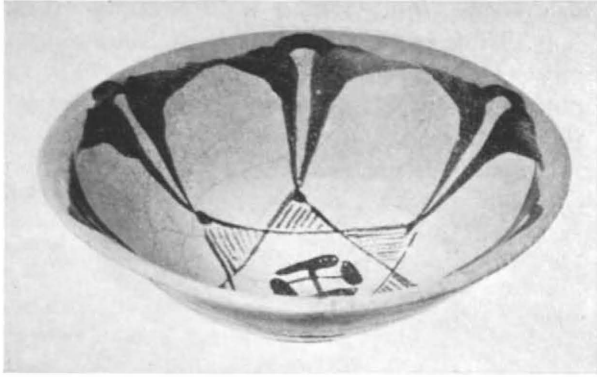
D 26, H 8 cm ; Vineyard Tepe

MIB

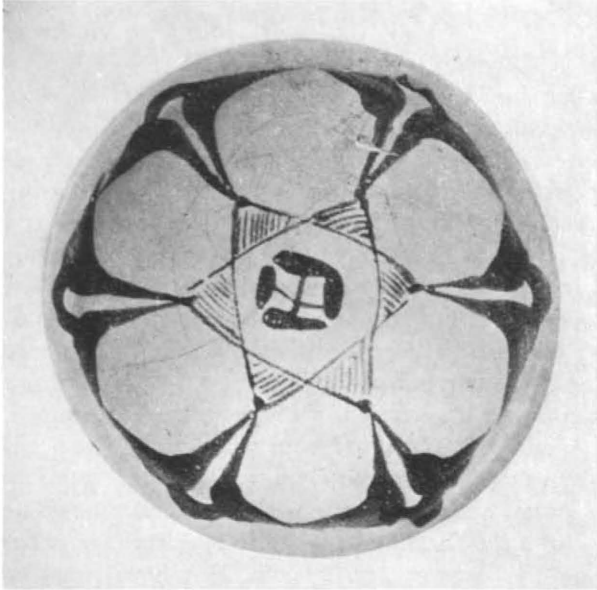
Imitation bichrome luster ware. Reddish body, white engobe, colorless glaze. Drawing in brown slip, added staining in brownish yellow. The design is composed of compartments of many shapes. Similarities in the drawing and the use of the same filling patterns (curling lines and leaves, and peacock eyes and dots) make it likely that this bowl and 49 and 50 were made in the same pottery. On two opposite sides a roughly circular compartment contains a bird. It resembles birds in the black on white ware in that it has pairs of projecting spots on its wings and body. (For an explanation of these spots, see Group 3, 66). Adjoining the compartment with the bird is a triangular compartment containing a plantlike motif of three leaves. Similar leaves in a similar placement occur on a brown and luster bowl found in Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. XIII, no. 2), a bowl dated by Kühnel to about 870 (*Ars Islamica*, I, p. 154, fig. 4).

A related bowl in the Metropolitan (63.159.1), referred to at 49 for its exterior decoration, offers variations of 51's interior design. A band of pseudo inscription is placed across the bottom, the birds (six, rather than two, and drawn with spiky feathers) are enclosed in triangular spaces, and the three-leaved plant forms, also six in number, appear in an elongated, more pointed version, the leaves resembling arrowheads.

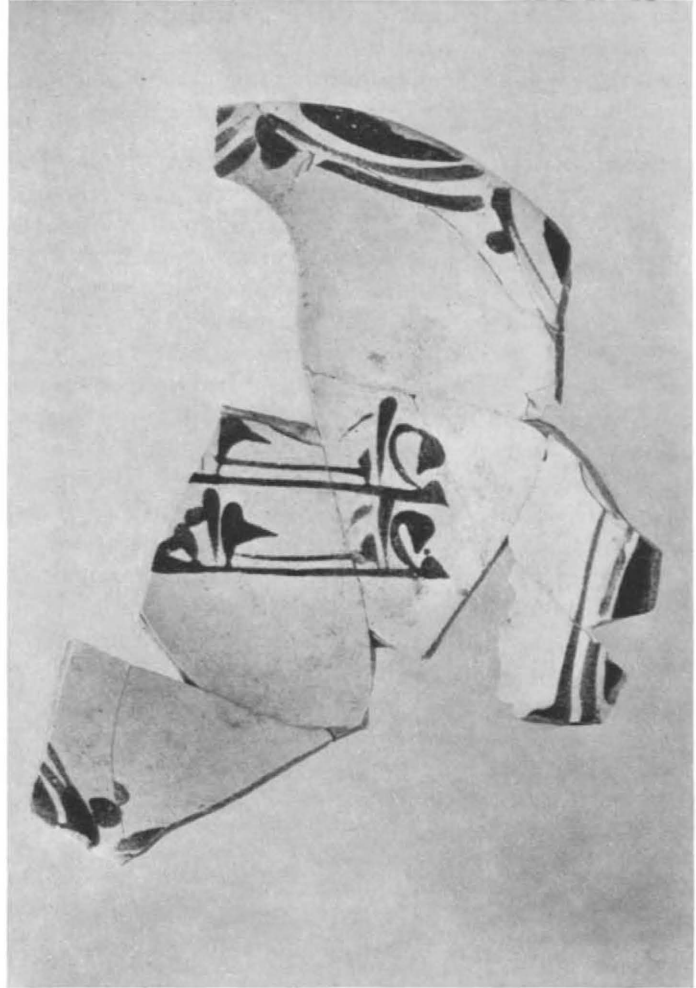
1a



1b



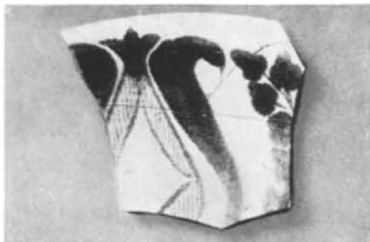
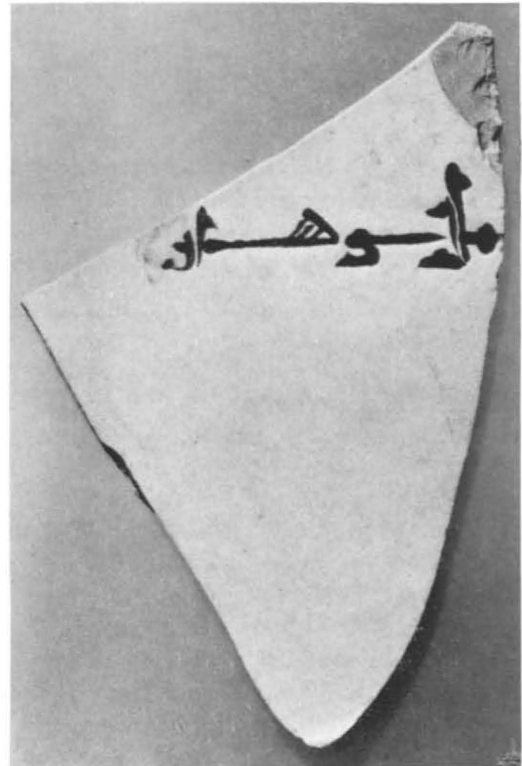
2



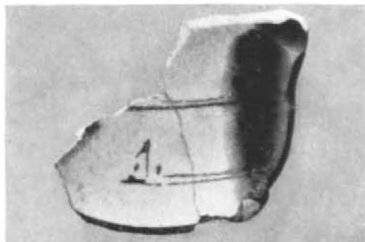
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4



5



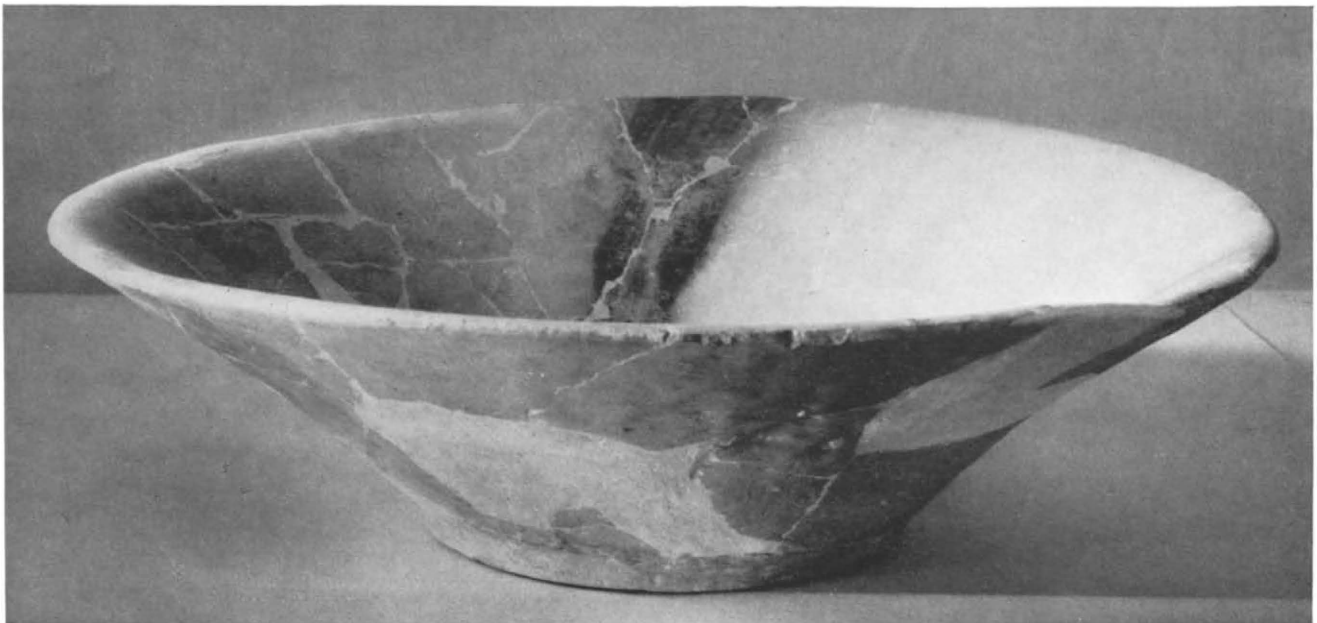
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8

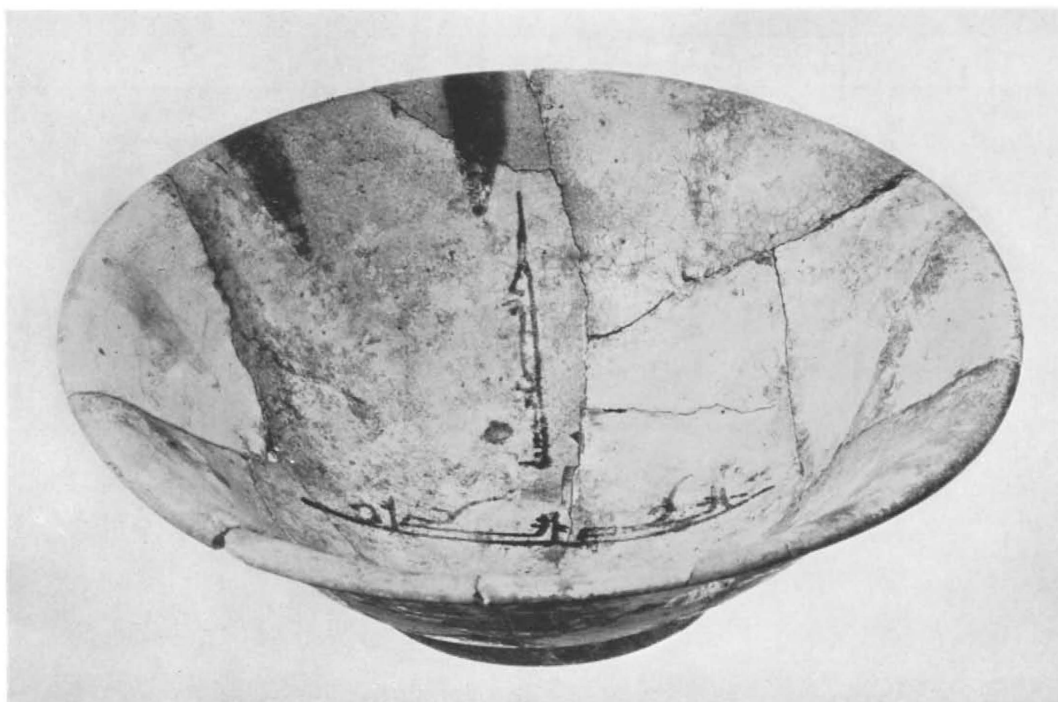


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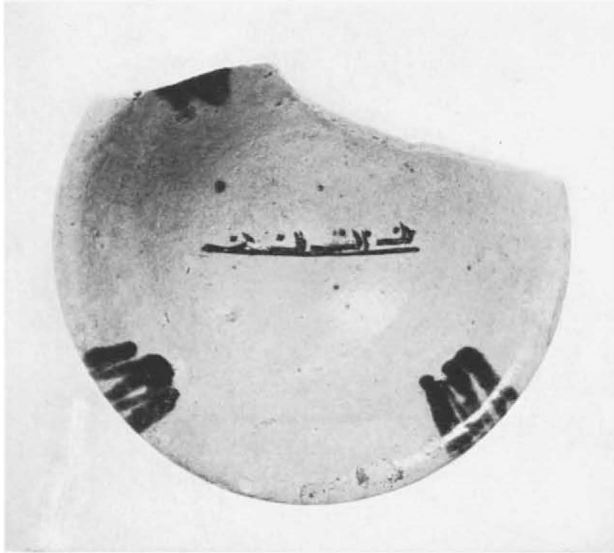
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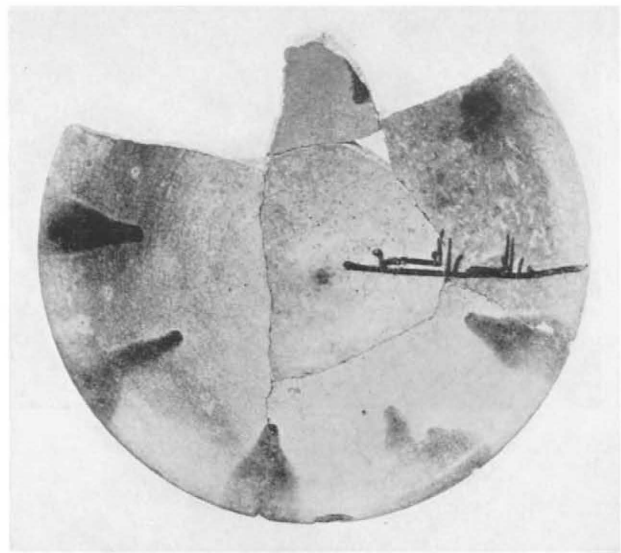
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12



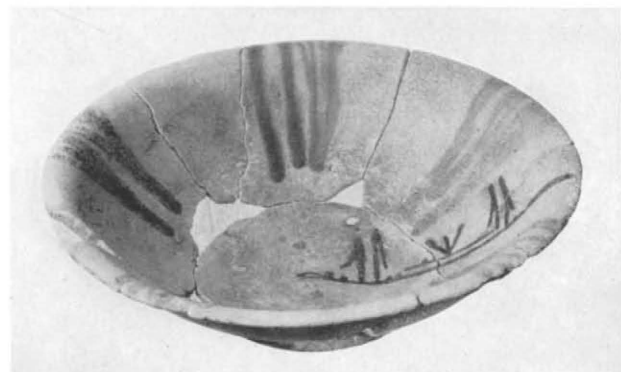
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14



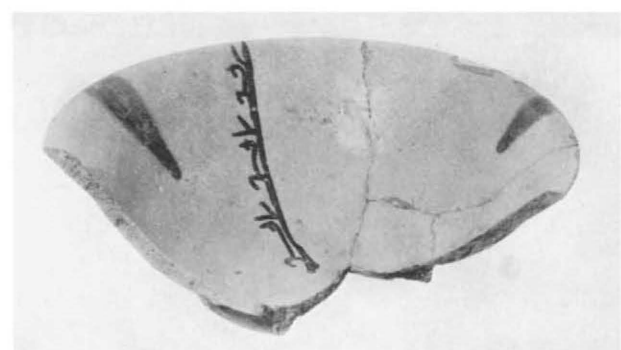
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16



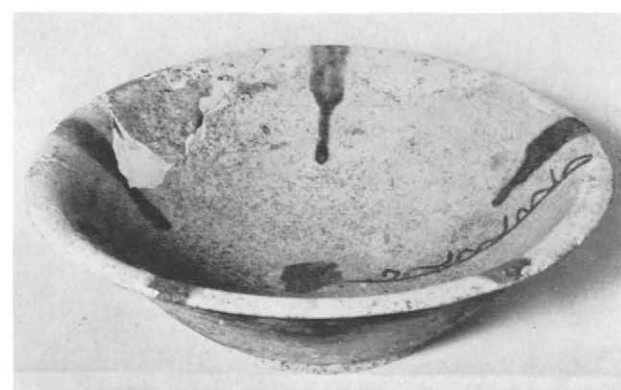
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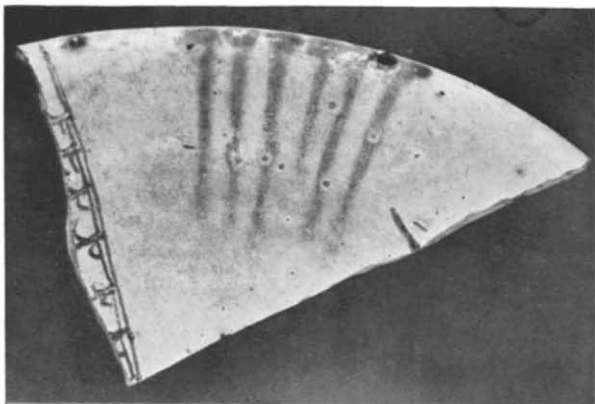
18



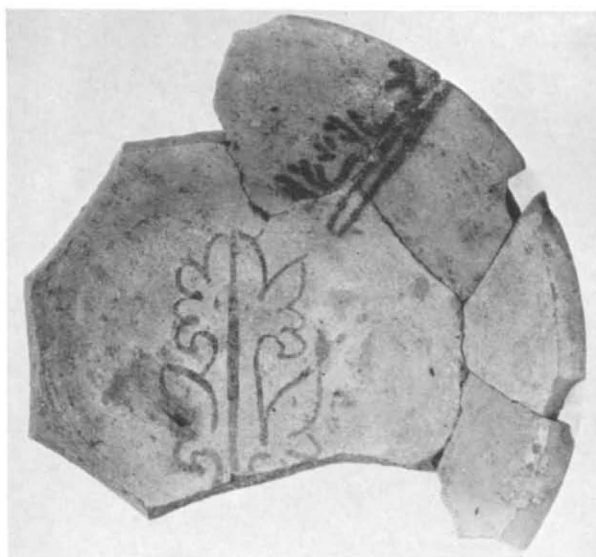
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20



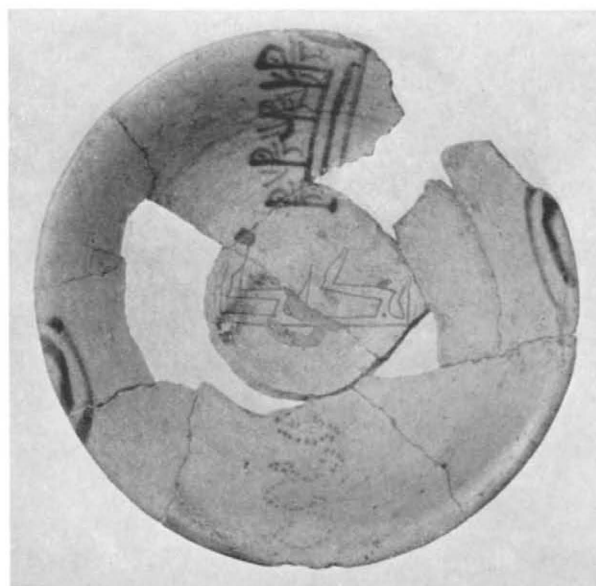
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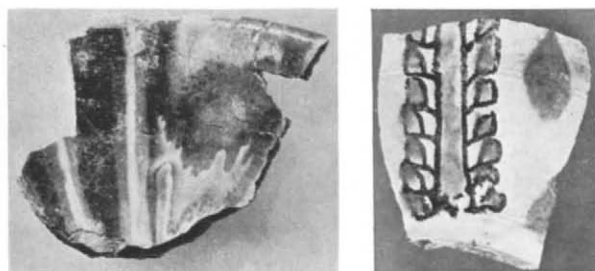
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25



23, 24



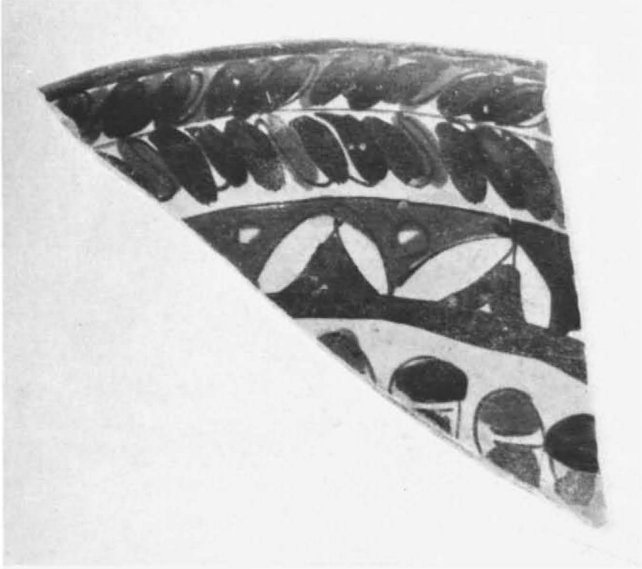
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27



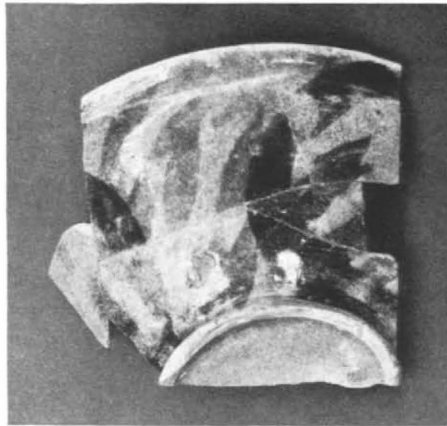
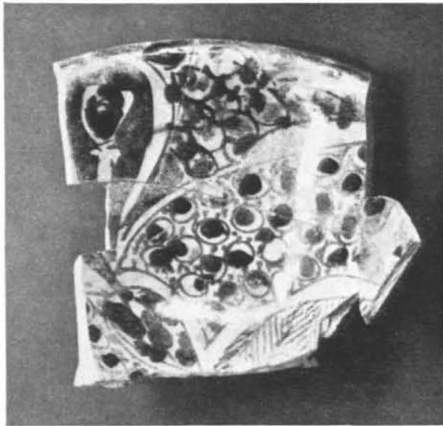
28a



28b



29a



29b, 30



31



32



33



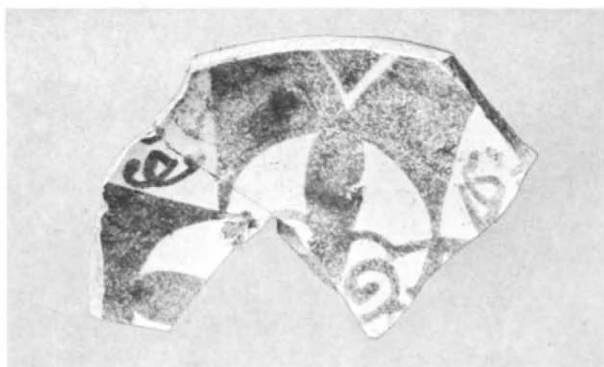
34



35a



36



35b



37a



38



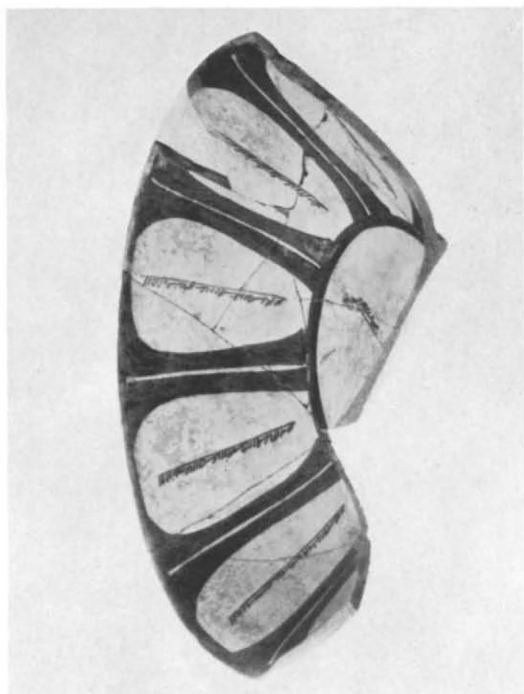
37b



39



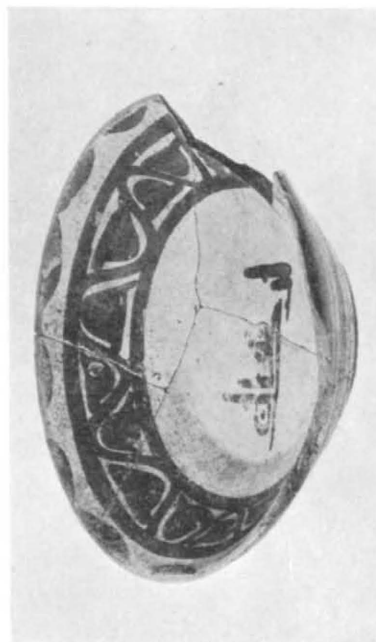
41a



41b



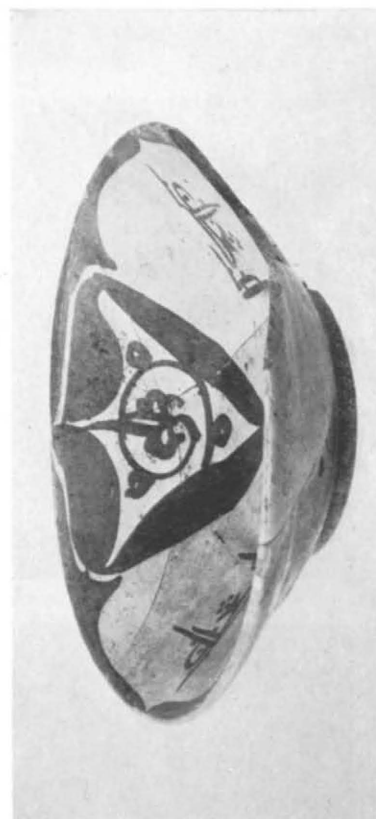
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40a

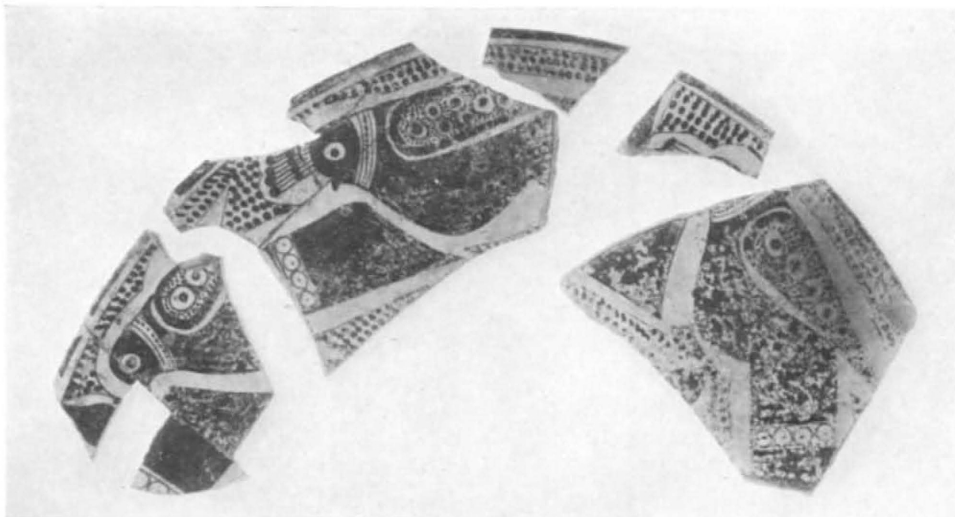


40b



42

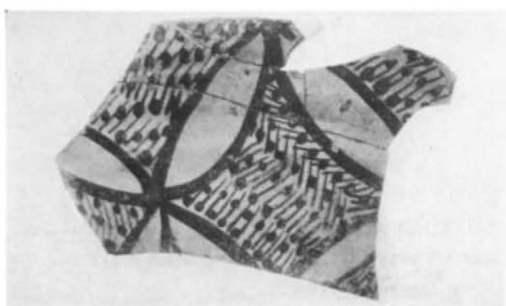
44a



45



44b



46a



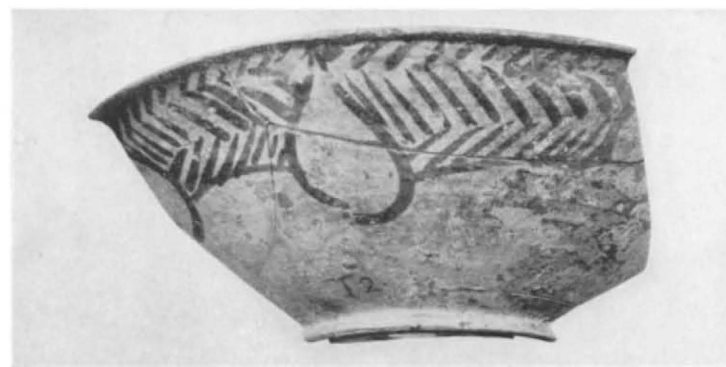
47



48



46b





49a



49b

50



51



7

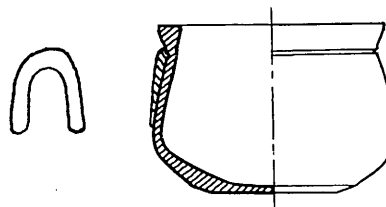
Opaque Yellow Ware

A ware with an opaque yellow glaze, produced by the application of a yellow engobe, was made and used in Nishapur during the ninth and tenth centuries, after which its manufacture appears to have died out. The decoration of the ware is almost invariably in green. The reddish body is similar to that of the color-splashed, black on white, and polychrome on white wares as made in Nishapur. Tin is an important ingredient of the engobe, and it is this element that causes the opacity of the lead glaze that covers it. The opacity of the yellow engobe varies considerably, depending on how densely it was applied. The green spots, strokes, and splashes of the decoration were probably applied after the glaze was poured. Produced by a copper base, the green for some reason tended to disintegrate before the rest of the glazed surface. A similar disintegration of green is also common in Chinese ceramics (A. L. Hetherington, *Chinese Ceramic Glazes*, South Pasadena, Calif., 1948, pp. 56, 57). When the glaze of the Nishapur ware has disintegrated, a common condition, the yellow pigment is left as a powdery layer the color of dry English mustard. Today in Nishapur a coarse ware is made that resembles the ninth- and tenth-century product, differing from it in that black is included in the decoration and that the yellow does not cover the entire surface (Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, November, 1961, p. 115, fig. 27).

The opaque yellow ware did not originate in Nishapur. It is likely that it first developed in Iraq, as an Islamic imitation of imported Chinese pieces. The ware has been found at Ctesiphon (fragment in the Metropolitan, 32.150.318) and Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. xxxi and p. 70, no. 247). The quality of the ware found in Ctesiphon and Samarra is superior to that of Nishapur—the body harder, less coarse, the potting thinner, the color a more golden yellow, free of the greenish cast characteristic of Nishapur. The ware was likewise made, probably also in imitation, in Syria, both at Tarsus (Day, *Asia*, March, 1941, pp. 143–148) and at Al-Mina (Lane, *Archaeologia*, LXXXVII, p. 39). It has been found, too, in Dahran, Arabia. A study piece in the Metropolitan from Dahran shows that some of this ware, which was

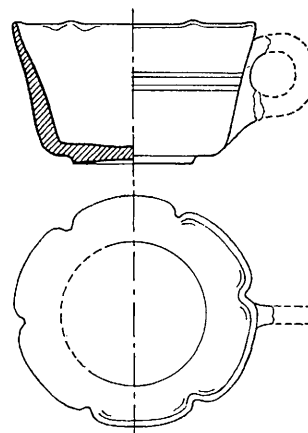
probably imported from Iraq, was of high quality, its smooth red body turned thin, its glaze a good yellow.

The ware was popular in Nishapur, and a considerable variety of shape is found in it. The potting tends to be coarse; there are no delicately turned bowls, as there are, for instance, in the polychrome on white ware. Some of the bowls have incurved rims, some outcurved. None are of large size. Some are deeper than any of the buff ware bowls—the other kind of Nishapur pottery that was popular for rather thickly turned vessels. Others are so shallow that they may be considered dishes. Lamps and pitchers were also made in this ware. Small jars were sometimes provided with curved lugs on the sides, but these were



1:3

decorative rather than functional, conforming to a fashion seen in the ninth- and tenth-century opaque white ware of both Nishapur (Group 6, 26) and Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, p. 49, fig. 119; *Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, figs. 2, 3). Handled cups with crinkly edges were not unknown; the drawing shows a fragment of one in poor condition (study piece) in the Metropolitan:



1:3

This particular shape would seem to carry on a tradition in the eastern regions that is exemplified in both metalwork and ceramics of an earlier date (Marshak, *Trudy*, V, p. 188, pl. 7). Vessels of this shape were not common in Iran until the twelfth or thirteenth century, when the crinkled rim became fashionable in alkaline-glazed wares. In copying the opaque yellow ware of Iraq the Nishapur potters did not have to make substitutions in the color scheme, as they did, for example, in the opaque white ware. The copper base needed for the green was readily obtained. The decoration is usually of the simplest kind and more formal than it is on the models from Iraq. A feature of this ware, and of no other, is a repeated circular cluster of small spots, all of the same size (1-4). This motif seems to have been especially favored in the Nishapur ware. A bowl found in Samarra, decorated with a single cluster of green spots, was considered by Sarre to be "under East Asiatic influence" (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, p. 72, fig. 157). The clusters of spots are usually supplemented, commonly by a line of Kufic or simulated Kufic. The word is usually barely recognizable as *barakeh* (blessing). A feature of these inscriptions is the addition of a decorative V, usually bisected by a short vertical stroke, forming a plantlike or arrowlike motif (2-4). Not always made a part of the inscription, the motif may appear independently (1), scattered on the background (2), or combined with other ornament (7). It also occurs in the opaque white ware made in Nishapur (Group 6, 10, 15).

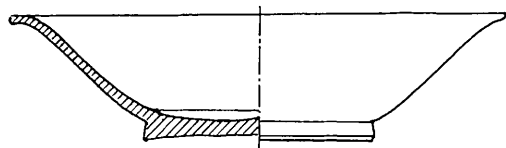
In the present ware the inscriptions and pseudo inscriptions are frequently arranged radially; the circumscribing bands of script that adorn so many black on white bowls are not to be seen. Radial inscriptions occur

in only two other wares of Nishapur, the black on white and the opaque white. In the latter the inscriptions are usually supplemented by splashes of green at the rim; in the present ware the inscriptions are usually secondary in interest to the clusters of spots. Stylistic resemblances in the scripts themselves, as well as in the use of tin in the glazes of both wares, suggest that the potters who made opaque white ware in Nishapur may also have made the present ware. Unlike certain potters of the black on white ware, who were able to write legible Arabic, the potters who decorated the yellow ware evidently knew only the general appearance of the written language. The same was probably true of many of the people who bought the ware, and it is quite likely that they considered an approximation of such a word as "blessing" sufficient for its beneficent effect.

Attention may be called to a few exceptional pieces in this group. One, represented by fragments in the Metropolitan (40.170.539) and not illustrated here, is a shallow, vertical-sided bowl with a pale yellowish body; it would seem that its decoration consisted of very freely drawn palmettes, alternately upright and inverted. Datable to the ninth century, the piece was probably imported from Iraq. A subgroup, represented by 14 and 17, is included on the basis of color—a transparent bright yellow over a white engobe, with decoration in green and occasionally with black also. Strictly, these are examples of polychrome on white ware, although unusual ones. Because of their rarity, it is uncertain whether they were made locally. A decorative link with the buff ware may be seen in a buff ware fragment included here (6), on which the whole background is yellow, rather in the manner of the present ware.

1 DISH

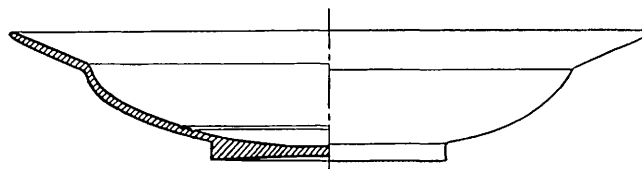
D 19.5, H 4.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB



Base slightly concave. Junction of wall and bottom marked by a slight vertical collar, a feature of some early pottery from Nishapur but more common in ninth-century glazed earthenware of Iraq. Exterior glazed but undecorated.

Decoration on interior, green on a strong yellow ground, consists of five circular clusters of spots, one on the bottom, four on the wall, the latter alternating with a treelike motif composed of three chevrons topped by a vertical stroke; a line of spots at the rim.

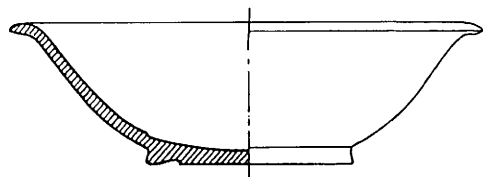
Among other examples of shallow bowls, one was found with a wide sloping rim above the bowl itself; it was decorated simply with green spots:



1:3

2 BOWL

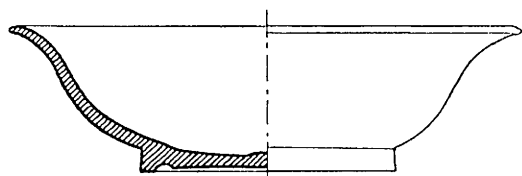
D 19.5, H 5.8 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB



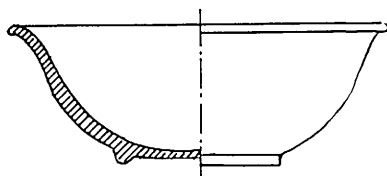
1:3

Exterior glazed but undecorated. Junction of wall and bottom marked by a slight vertical collar (compare 1). Decoration: five clusters of spots, as on 1, those on the wall alternating with a radial pseudo inscription: a *kaf*-like letter, reversed and adorned with a superimposed V. Additional V's, made into a plantlike motif with a vertical center stroke, fill the spaces around the wall. At the rim, a line of spots. The reversed *kaf*, if such it be, is common in inscriptions in two other Nishapur wares, the buff (Group 1, 63) and the opaque white (Group 6, 11, 13), in both of which it appears without the added V. The plantlike motif on the wall was used extensively on the exterior of a polychrome luster bowl found in Rayy (Pézard, *Céramique*, pl. cxxxi, upper).

The bases of these bowls with flaring rims show several variations, probably all local: a bevel (2), a groove, or a properly made foot ring:



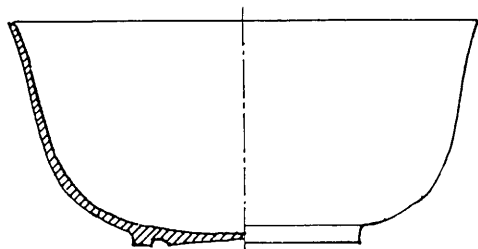
1:3



1:3

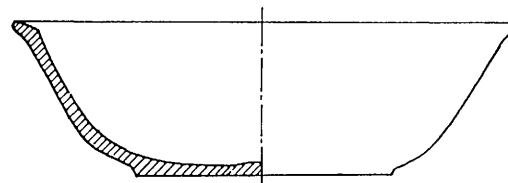
3 a,b BOWL

D 18, H 8.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.90



1:3

Base has a groove near the circumference eight millimeters wide. Such a groove also occurs in the buff ware of Nishapur. The glaze is considerably disintegrated, as is often the case in this ware. Decoration: three clusters of spots and three radial pseudo inscriptions. The verticals are furnished with added slanting strokes, in the fashion also to be seen in the opaque white ware made in Nishapur (Group 6, 10, 15, 18). A decorative V, placed above what may be the letter *kaf*, which is reversed, has an added center stroke, giving it a plantlike appearance. This motif, somewhat more resembling a fleur-de-lis, is found over the letter *sad* on an opaque white dish with an inscription in green found in Bibi Zubaida at Rayy and attributed to the ninth century (*Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts*, August, 1935, p. 57, fig. 5). Used similarly, it is found on monochrome luster ware of the tenth century (Pézard, *Céramique*, pl. cxxvii, lower left; Flury, *Syria*, V, p. 306, fig. 1; Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 575 A; Kühnel, *Ars Islamica*, I, p. 156, fig. 7). The rim of 3 is decorated with large spots. The threefold appearance of a circular cluster of spots is less common than a fourfold. Other bowls of approximately this shape were decorated with only a single cluster of rather large green spots on the bottom. Some bowls shaped generally like 3 but potted thicker were provided with a rim beveled on the inside:

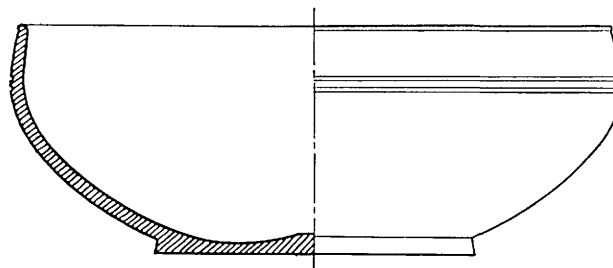


1:3

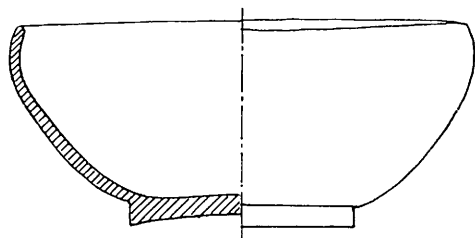
4 a,b BOWL

D 17.5, H 7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.52

Base strongly concave. Low sides, incurving rim. Almost no engobe, so that little yellow colors the almost transparent glaze and the brownish color of the clay shows through. Decoration on interior: four clusters of spots and four radial pseudo inscriptions, loosely drawn; a line of spots at the rim. On the exterior: large blobs of green near rim. Shallow bowls of this poor color were made in great quantity in Nishapur; similarities among them suggest that they came from a single pottery. Some have a



1:3



1:3

flat base, and some have a concave base (drawing, above), and some have two parallel grooves on the shoulder.

5 BOWL FRAGMENT

D 19.3 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 40.170.519a, b

A portion of this fragment is in the Teheran museum. Glaze shows signs of overfiring. Decoration: lengths of pseudo inscription placed haphazardly; spots at the rim. Exterior: green blobs near the rim. Beneath them a narrow circumscribing groove. The placement of the script seen here was less common in this ware than the radial treatment of 2, 3, 4.

6 FRAGMENT

H 7.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.464

A specimen of buff ware, presented here to demonstrate a relationship. In the buff ware yellow is generally used locally; in the present ware it is used as an engobe. This buff ware fragment is particularly close to the opaque yellow ware in that its entire background is yellow and that spotting with green obviously played an important part in its decoration. The remainder of the pattern, a triangular form, is outlined and crosshatched in black.

7 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 11 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.465

Exterior glazed but undecorated. Base, concave, is glazed. Glaze is a good opaque yellow; the opacity is due to tin, which is present in both the engobe and glaze. Decoration is in green. The plantlike motif of a V with added center stroke, seen in various uses on 1-4, is here the principal decoration on bottom and wall.

8 a,b BOWL FRAGMENT

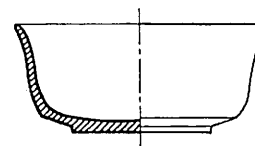
H 21.6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

A decoration of innumerable little green spots was planned, but elsewhere than on the rim they ran toward the bottom during the firing, producing a "furry" appearance. The

exterior (8b) is splashed with irregular blobs of green. Like the spots, these ran.

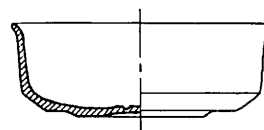
9 DISH

D 9.4, H 4.1 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 39.40.25



1:3

Both interior and exterior are decorated with small green spots, the effect spoiled by the disintegration of the glaze. Blobs of green at the rim on the interior. Many such small vessels were found, varying considerably in shape. Some had incurved rims. The bases of some were flat, like that of 9. Some had an added circular groove in the bottom.



1:3

The exteriors of these pieces were glazed but generally undecorated; some of the interiors had only a central cluster of spots. Small bowls with green spots on a yellow ground were also found in Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, p. 70, nos. 247, 248).

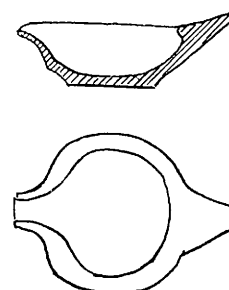
10 LAMP

L 10 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

Decorated with a few green splashes. The handle originally consisted of two prongs. A more common type of lamp had a loop handle.

11 LAMP

L 8.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.289



1:3

Decorated with a few green splashes on the interior. Spout discolored by use. Smaller lamps were found, small

enough to be considered no more than playthings, but even these showed signs of burning.

12 DISH

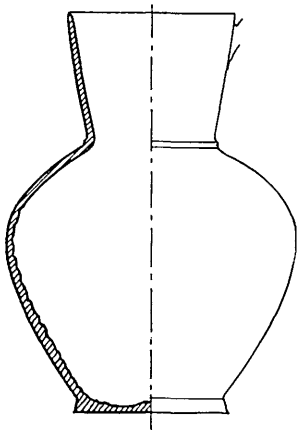
D 18.2, H 6.7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.5

Poorly made, with flat base. Because the glaze contains only a little yellow, the color of the clay shows through unpleasantly. Decoration: random green strokes. Many such dishes were found, all with flat bases: kitchenware or ware for the poor.

13 PITCHER FRAGMENT

H 10.9 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Intense opaque yellow glaze with green splashes. Many small pitchers and jars thus decorated were found; the drawing is of one such with handle missing. Pitchers of



1:3

similar shape, made in the ninth century, were also left undecorated and unglazed (Group 12, 33).

14 BOWL

D 21.4, H 6.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.108

Actually an example of polychrome on white ware, with splashes of green and central spots and rim line of brownish black applied on a white engobe, glazed clear yellow with glaze derived from chrome. The green denotes the presence of copper oxide, applied locally. It is introduced here because the decoration closely resembles that of the opaque yellow ware and is unlike that of any of the rest of the polychrome on white. The base, slightly concave, is beveled. Fired inverted, stacked on a stilt over another inverted bowl. Place of manufacture uncertain. Very few

such pieces were found. A fragment of one is in the Teheran museum.

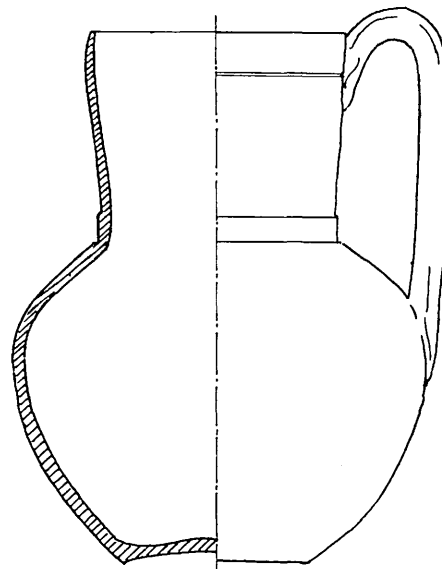
15 PITCHER

H 21.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

The opaque yellow glaze was originally covered with green splashes in the manner of 16. The overall shape as well as the wavy bands combed on the projecting collars are characteristic of ninth-century unglazed pitchers of Nishapur (Group 12, 14).

16 PITCHER

H 22 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.114



1:3

Reminiscent, like 15, of ninth-century unglazed pitchers. Green splashes on yellow glaze. The glaze has obliterated a combed decoration on the projecting collar. Base, concave, has two shallow concentric rings.

17 PITCHER

H 21.5 cm ; Vineyard Tepe
MIB

Like 14, an example of polychrome on white ware, the clear yellow glaze applied on a white engobe. Clear green splashes on the glaze. Two grooves encircle the shoulder. The top of the pitcher is bent up in such a way as to suggest vaguely a bird's head, an uncommon feature in the pottery of Nishapur. Place of manufacture uncertain.

1



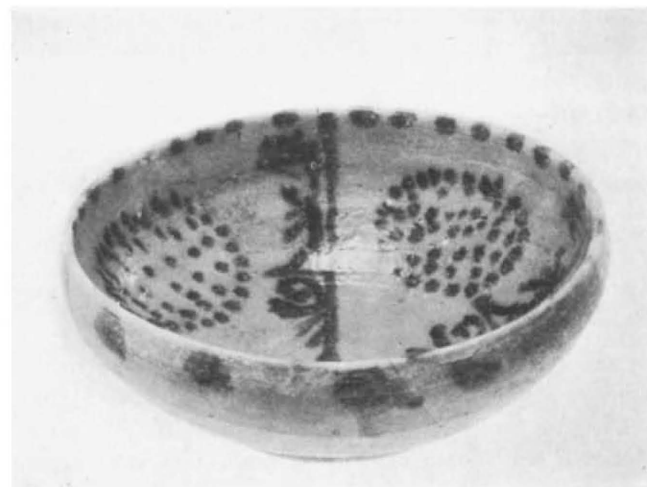
2



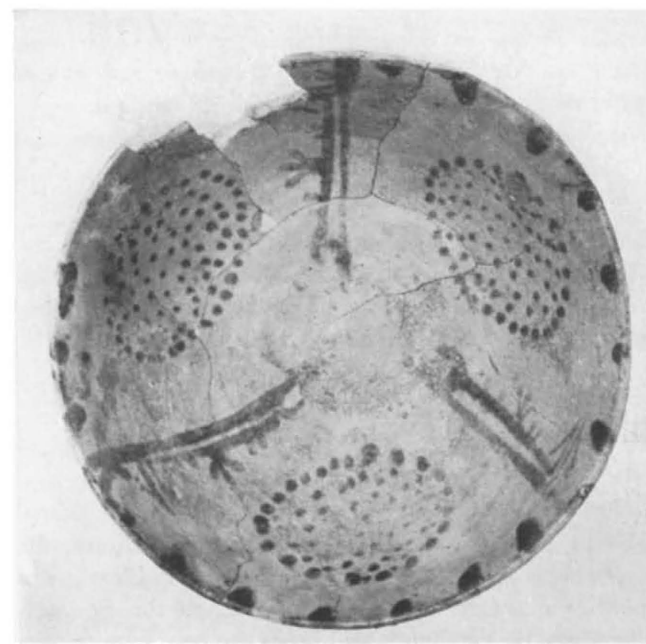
3a



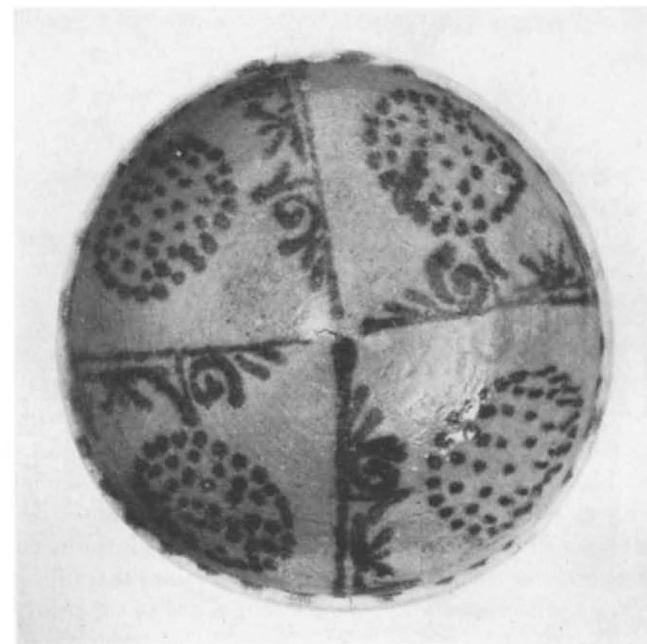
4a



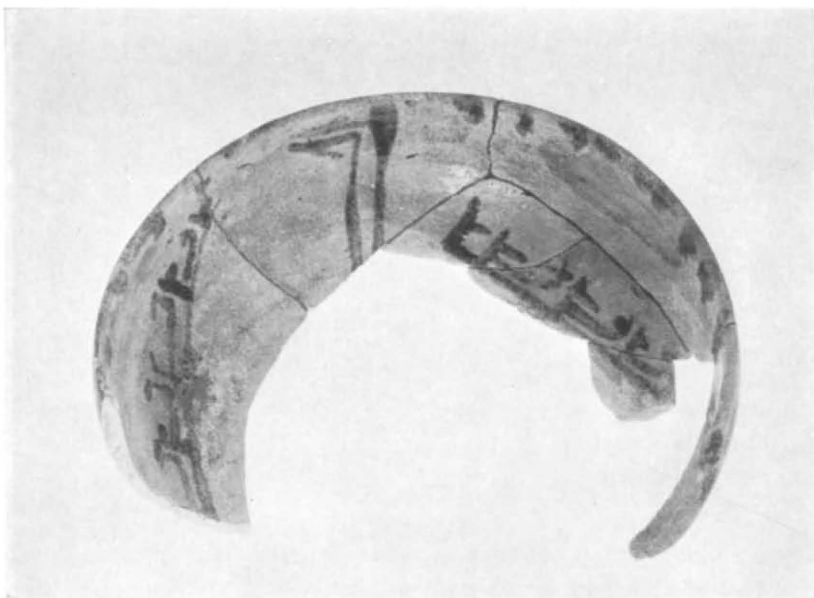
3b



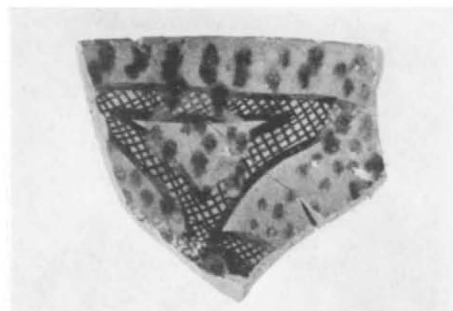
4b



5



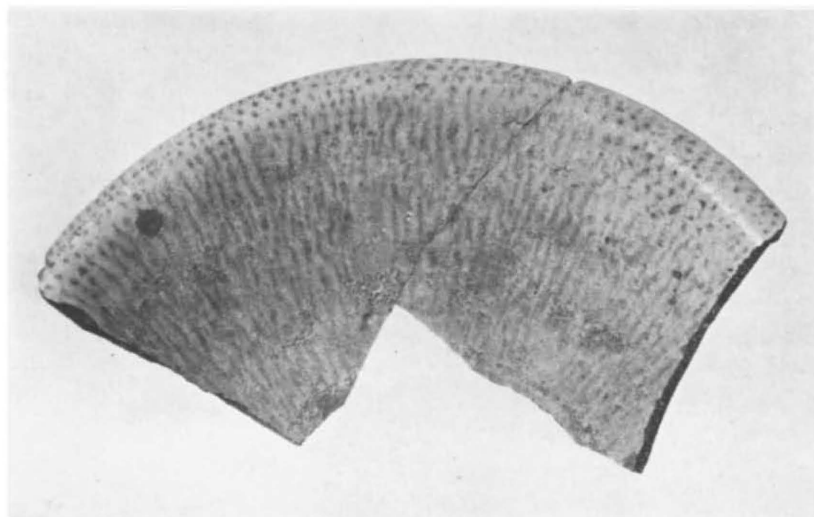
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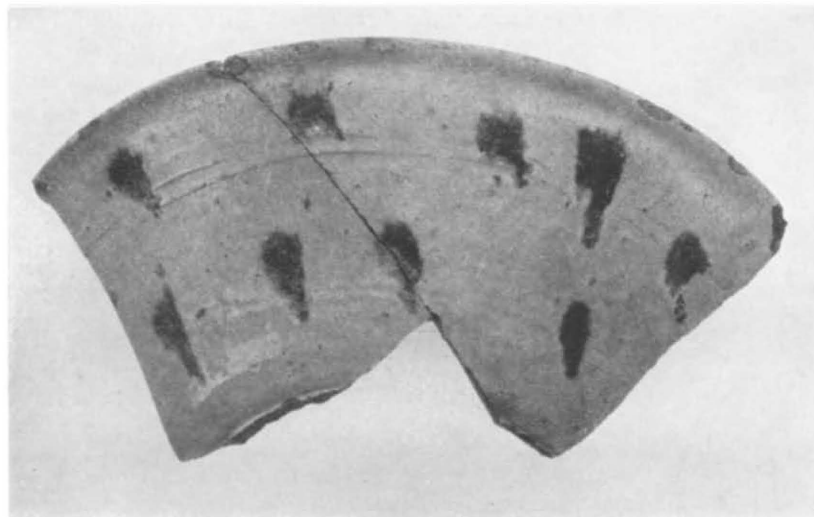
8a



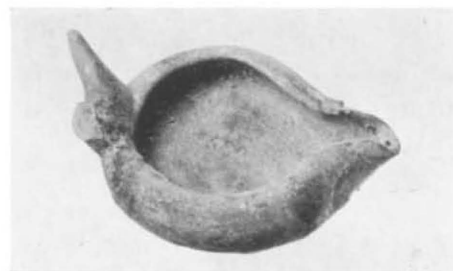
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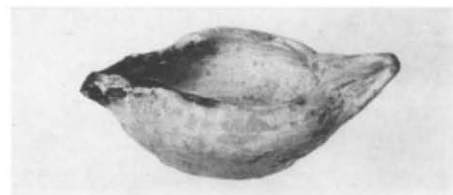
8b



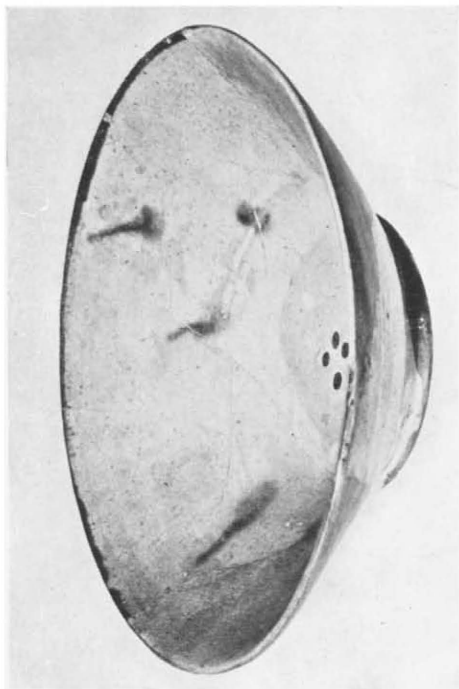
10



11



14



13



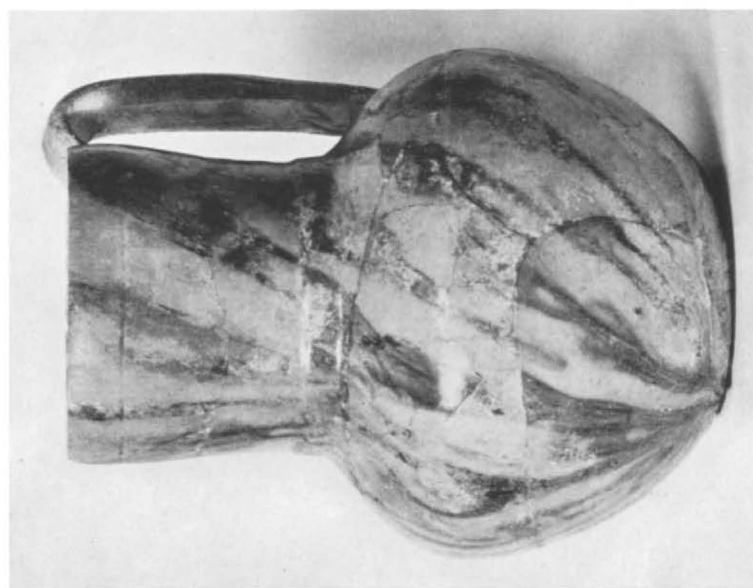
12



17



16



15



8

Ware with Yellow-staining Black

A number of vessels found in Nishapur with decoration in black on a white engobe form a separate group for the reason that they have a distinctive yellowish glaze. Such pieces, ascribed to Rayy in Pézard, *Céramique* (pl. cxiii, top), are probably from Nishapur. The color, which is not uniform overall, cannot be considered an unintentional tinting due to lack of care in the preparation of a "colorless" lead glaze, as is sometimes the case with crudely made yellowish or greenish black on white pieces. The color on the present pieces, varying from clear pale lemon to a transparent full yellow of considerable strength, is strongest in the vicinity of a black pigment that tends to separate into specks, especially when it is lightly applied. Experiments made for the Metropolitan by the late Maude Robinson, a skilled potter, showed that it is possible to duplicate the effect by introducing oxide of chromium into a black.

Staining effects occur in other Nishapur wares. An olive green slip that yellows the glaze in its vicinity was used on a ware that was obviously intended to resemble monochrome luster ware (Group 6, 40, 44); this slip was also used in Afrasiyab. Another pigment of this nature, raw sienna in intrinsic color, was used in a subordinate way on a number of polychrome on white bowls (Group 4, 44, 47). Both of these pigments were used to produce linear patterns. Another staining pigment, used locally in the form of blobs, is the opaque yellow of the buff ware; this is allied to the yellow of the opaque yellow ware, which was applied as an overall color. The staining black of the present ware is to be found in two others: the polychrome on white (Group 4, 44, 47) and the ware with colored engobe, in which ware a few exceptional pieces without an engobe have the color applied locally on bands of white slip (Group 5, 34, 35). A few more pieces in this ware with engobe have the color likewise on local grounds of white (Group 5, 50, 51, 53). A few bowls were found with a clear yellow glaze obtained from

chrome (Group 7, 14), but in these the color does not come from the use of a staining black.

The natural clay body of the present ware, firing reddish or occasionally near buff, is in general not distinguishable from the body used in the color-splashed, black on white, or polychrome on white ware. Although the shapes of the vessels are on the whole similar to those of the black on white ware—in particular, a bowl with straight flaring sides—a few are uncommon in that ware: notably a bowl with incurving rim—or absent altogether, as a deep bowl with nearly vertical sides. Conversely, some of the shapes in the black on white ware, such as a circular platter with a shallow well, do not occur in the present ware. The ware decorated with yellow-staining black, in light of this, cannot be considered a byproduct of the potters who made the black on white ware.

Although many of the present vessels are well turned, none have a true foot, such as occurs in the polychrome on white group. The engobe in most cases covers the entire vessel, including the base, although on a few pieces it extends only a little way down on the exterior. After the application of decoration to the engobe, the pieces were covered with a very glossy lead glaze. When well preserved, this has a slight soap-bubble iridescence. The glaze sometimes spalls, a defect common in other Nishapur wares that have an engobe thickly applied.

With its lemon yellow or slightly golden tones, the present ware may perhaps suggest monochrome luster ware, especially as there are occasional resemblances in the designs, particularly in the inclusion of birds and such details as peacock eyes. However, the emphasis on black makes it clear that the potter did not use his yellow-staining pigment in imitation of a ware that he could not make. (Black, of course, does not appear in any true early Islamic luster ware.) In conjunction with his staining black the potter often used an ordinary black, such as is common in the black on white ware. It is usually a strong

color, without any tinge of purple at the edge, and it is usually applied thickly. When the two blacks are used, the principal lines of the design are in the stronger, more stable color, the details in the staining black (Color Plate 9, page xx). The combination makes for a less stark effect than one finds in the black on white ware. In a few pieces (23) minor details are painted in red slip.

The ware has been found in places other than Nishapur, namely Gurgan (the Metropolitan's sherd collection), Transoxiana (unpublished), and Shahr-i-Daqianus (Stein, *Archaeological Reconnaissances*, pl. xxi, nos. 571, 652). These sites are either in the eastern part of Iran or still further east. With the exception of a bowl attributed to Rayy (identified in the discussion of 14), the ware has not been found in the western half of Iran. No kilns or wastewaters confirm the manufacture of the ware in Nishapur, but the considerable amount of the ware discovered there allows us to assume that at least some of it was locally made. The place of origin of any imports must be sought in Gurgan or Transoxiana. The evidence in regard to Afrasiyab is inconclusive in that no sherds of the ware are in the collection in the Islamisches Museum, Berlin.

As to when the ware was first used in Nishapur, the evidence of the excavations is precise. Since no trace of it was found in the levels that were indubitably of the earliest period, it may be said that the ware was unknown in Nishapur before the tenth century, more particularly the latter part of it. Its manufacture probably extended through the eleventh century.

As well as in its color, the ware is distinctive in its decorations. These are so characteristic that even though some of the individual motifs occur in other wares of Nishapur, it is usually possible to identify an example of the ware from nothing more than a black-and-white photograph. As a general principle, excepting a few vessels with crude, simple designs, the decoration does not cover the entire inside surface. It is either placed near the rim, typically in some sort of band, or it occupies selected areas elsewhere. In either case a considerable amount of the surface is left undecorated, a restraint found also in the black on white ware. One of the commonest features on the yellow-tinted bowls, one of the few that is also common on the black on white ware, is a sawtooth rim border, painted either continuously or in limited lengths. This may be painted in the ordinary nonstaining black or in the staining black. The sawtooth often has a hairline added beneath it (1, 3, 14, 19, 26). In some cases the rim is decorated with half-moons (9, 10, 12, 21, 29). Half-moon borders do not appear in the black on white ware of Nishapur, but they are to be seen in the imitation luster ware (Group 6, 2). Most of the yellow-tinted bowls with this border have inscriptions with outlined compartments between the letters. Another feature in the present ware

is an outlined compartment filled with spots and peacock eyes—the center dot sometimes omitted—painted in yellow-staining black. Irregular in shape, such compartments occupy the spaces that occur between the vertical letters or pseudo letters of Kufic inscriptions. The earliest known use of such compartments filling contours around letters is dated 955 (Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript in the Chester Beatty Library*, pl. viia). In the yellow-tinted ware the inscriptions themselves are always painted in the solid nonstaining black. Similar compartments occur in a subgroup of the inanimate group of buff ware, where they fill spaces created by foliating bands (Group 1, 38); associated with inscriptions, they appear in the polychrome on white ware (Group 4, 1), the opaque white ware imitating luster ware (Group 6, 51), and the ware with blackish engobe decorated in white slip beneath a greenish glaze (Group 5, 8). Compartments of another type appear in the yellow-stained ware, their filling consisting of irregular curls, spots, and small circles (9, 10). This type, which has no exact parallel in the other wares just mentioned, closely resembles a form to be seen on lustered pottery of Egypt at the beginning of the eleventh century (Bahgat & Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, pls. xiv, no. 2, xxvi, no. 2, xxvii, no. 1; Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 23B). The curls that fill such compartments are perhaps reflected in the subsidiary decoration of an atypical buff ware bowl (Group 1, 47). Inscriptions form the major decoration on a number of the vessels, but the emphasis appears to be less on the meaning than on the decoration (9–12). Although the lettering itself resembles that on other wares, there is no equivalent here to the saws and proverbs that appear on the black on white bowls. Instead, letters suggesting benedictory words are repeated to form a band of decoration. A cursive inscription, the only one on this or any other Nishapur ware, was found on a bowl fragment (31). It may be said that the style of the inscriptions on the yellow-tinted bowls does not duplicate many of the forms of lettering seen on the black on white ware, the polychrome on white, or the slip-painted ware with colored engobe. Contrariwise, a strange scribble, the ultimate debasement of Kufic script, is one of the commonest features of this ware. The motif consists of a small circle, usually containing a dot, flanked on either side by vertical strokes equal in length to the diameter of the circles. The intention may have been to produce something that looked like Arabic, and the derivation may have been from the word *al yumn* (happiness), which figures so often in Islamic pottery of the late tenth to the twelfth century in eastern Iran and Transoxiana. However, in mutations such as this, the closest resemblance may not be the correct one. The significant thing is that the motif, even if it was accepted by the ignorant of the tenth and eleventh centuries as meaningful writing,

is simply a decorative device. As such it is usually placed in narrow bands, sometimes continuous (6, 28), sometimes limited (1, 8). It is also used to fill outlined areas (1, 3, 8). Repeated in very short lengths, it fills circumscribing bands or radial bands (15–18). Sometimes it fills background areas (14, 19). With the exception of an occasional use on an atypical piece in another ware (Group 5, 34) the motif is confined to the present ware. It seems to have been used only in Khurasan and Gurgan. Only stray pieces have been found elsewhere, such as a bowl, already mentioned, said to have been discovered at Rayy. In a related form of this motif, the dotted circle is replaced by a whorl.

A repetitive addition resembling a *kaf* may be placed immediately beneath a sawtooth rim decoration (32). This same fragment and 8 illustrate the use in the present ware of a line with very short strokes added to it on one side, giving a resemblance to miniature writing. For examples of this miniature script in the polychrome on white ware, see Group 4, 39, 40. Another characteristic motif in the present ware is a group of almost circular loops or "scales," each containing a dot (15–18, 32); these are attached to other decorative features such as circles and bands. Black spots may be used in groups of three (16) or four (6), generally connected by fine lines; occasionally, without connecting lines, they may constitute an entire decoration (27).

The human form in its entirety does not appear in the yellow-tinted ware, but a striking decoration on a few bowls is a representation of the female breast, treated as a compartment filled with various ornamental details (1, 8). Human eyes and hands, treated as disembodied decorative units, appear in mural paintings in Nishapur (Hauser, Upton & Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, November, 1938, p. 7, fig. 5; Hauser & Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, April, 1942, p. 104, fig. 28, p. 105, fig. 29), but the motif of the breast seems peculiar to the yellow-tinted ware and, furthermore, to the examples found in Nishapur.

Several bowls were found on which a simplified, sketchy bird occurs as a central motif (10), a fashion likewise seen in the black on white ware. A few fragments of the present ware, discovered in the excavations, are decorated with

representations of large, more or less fantastic birds. They are usually rather crudely drawn in bold outline (22), in contrast to the precise, formal patterns of the nonfigurative vessels. In the period since 1940 additional bowls of this type have come to light, allegedly and probably from Nishapur. Most of the birds on these pieces have oddly placed wings, not unlike those of 22. Like one or two of the motifs mentioned earlier, such birds indicate some connection with the designs on the ware with colored engobe (Group 5, 5).

Animals also appear on this ware, even more crudely drawn than the birds. Although only one or two examples were found in the excavations, and they of the most fragmentary nature, others have since appeared on the market reputedly from Nishapur. The drawing is of a representation of a cheetahlike creature on one of the excavated



1:2

fragments. A peculiarity of vessels so decorated is that the animal—there is always only one—forms the sole decoration; the compartments that accompany the birds do not appear. The bowls with animals are probably of later date than those decorated with birds; it is unlikely that they were made until near the end of the eleventh century. An excellent example ascribed to Nishapur and decorated with a cheetah or leopard was once in the Matossian collection (*Exposition d'art musulman Catalogue*, pl. vii). Noteworthy is the treatment of the beast's eye and brow, both of which are boldly prolonged to the rear by means of lines, like the eyes and brows of a rider and his horse on a Nishapur buff ware bowl (Group 1, 62). A related bowl in the Bezalel National Museum, Jerusalem, is decorated with a cruder leopard, his feet resembling spotted bags (*Ceramic Art of Iran Exhibition Catalogue*, no. 59).

1 a,b BOWL

D 22, H 9 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Red body, white engobe, nearly colorless glaze. Where affected by the black of the decoration, which contains chrome, the glaze is yellow. The base, concave, has a bevel. The wall flares widely for about two-thirds of its height, then becomes nearly vertical. The rim is painted with a black line; this has spalled in places. Touching this line on the interior is a sawtooth; beneath this the bowl is encircled by a heavy black line between two hairlines (compare treatment on 3, 14, 19). The principal decoration consists of two representations of a female breast, their thin outline reinforced by a heavy line. Each breast contains a band and an elliptical form filled with an ornament of short vertical lines alternating with a dotted circle. This motif, essentially derived from Kufic writing, is much in evidence in the present ware. To a lesser extent it appears in the slip-painted ware with colored engobe, where it is also painted in yellow-staining black (Group 5, 34). Between the breasts are two leaflike forms containing a spiral at the lower end. Centered on the bottom of the bowl is a heavily drawn near circle with a central spot, a motif that also occurs in the polychrome on white ware. The exterior (1b) is decorated with two pearlike shapes containing a vertical stroke and two ovals filled with vertical strokes. The first of these motifs recurs on 3, the second on 13. From a location suggesting manufacture in the late tenth century.

For another bowl in this group decorated with a breast, see 8.

2 BOWL

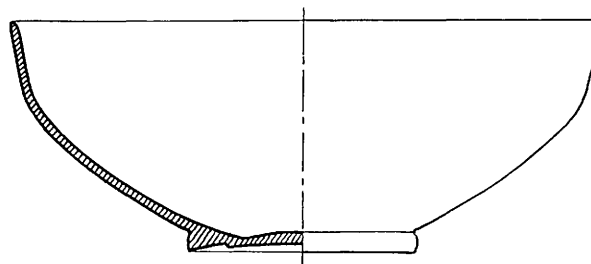
D 25, H 10.3 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Coarse reddish body, poorly turned. Base strongly concave, without glaze or engobe. Flaring widely from base, vessel has upright, incurving rim. Decoration entirely in yellow-staining black. Exterior: a row of spots around the rim. Interior: an encircling band, bounded top and bottom by a thick line and a thin line (compare 1, 3, 14, 19) and filled with a unit of two vertical lines alternating with a three-looped U-like motif, resting on its side. Centered on the bottom of the bowl, an irregular circle containing a spot. The looped motif in the band, derived from Kufic writing, is a debased form of the word *barakeh* (blessing). Found frequently in the present ware (4, 5), it also occurs in the black on white ware (Group 3, 73). Many pieces like 2 were found. One in the Metropolitan (38.40.134), its interior decoration like that of 2, is decorated on the exterior like 3. Another in the Metropolitan (study fragment) has the pattern in purplish black within borders of purplish black augmented by a thin line of greenish yellow. The exterior of this fragment is covered

with engobe but is unglazed. All of these pieces, judging by their locations, were made at the end of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh century.

3 BOWL

D 23.2, H 9.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 38.40.288



1:3

Judging by workmanship and decoration, probably from the same manufactory as 1. Reddish body. Base, slightly concave, has a bevel; it is without glaze or engobe. All the decoration is in yellow-staining black. At the rim, a sawtooth. Below this, placed between two heavy encircling lines and two hairlines, are swags containing elliptical forms filled with a row of double circles alternating with vertical strokes. A double curve resembling a pair of U's is added at the junctions of the swags. Centered on the bottom is a loosely drawn bird, similar to that on 10. The exterior is decorated on the upturned rim with a few inverted shapes containing a vertical stroke, one of the motifs present on the exterior of 1. Probably not earlier than late tenth century. The swags and their fillings constitute one of the few links between the decoration on the glazed pottery with a natural clay body and that on the later type of ware with a composed body and alkaline glaze (compare Group 11, 1). Another piece in the present group with such a link is 24.

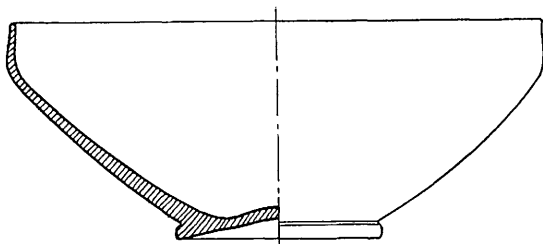
4 BOWL

D 20.5, H 7.5 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Wall flares from base, then becomes vertical. Flat lip extends outward. Decoration, confined to the exterior and in yellow-staining black only, consists of the same debased pseudo Kufic seen on 2 and 5. Everted lips occur in this ware only on bowls as crudely decorated as this. Very common in Nishapur were bowls decorated like 4 but smaller in size; most of them had incurved rims. The same decoration occurs in the black on white ware (Group 3, 73), and in this particular group one cannot always be sure, when looking at black-and-white photographs, which of the two wares is being illustrated.

5 BOWL

D 18.5, H 6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB



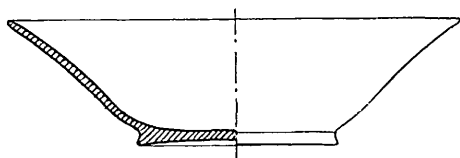
1:3

Widely flaring wall, vertical rim. Decoration, in yellow-staining black only, consists of the simulated writing seen on 2 and 4, here treated as a cross. Not earlier than late tenth century. Similar bowls were found. On one the cross had only four of the U-like forms, on another a single band of the decoration crossed the bowl. On still another, found in Sabz Pushan, now in the Teheran museum, a single U-shaped form was placed on either side of a single band of the U-element. The U-shape, with double outlines, is merely a distortion of the form seen on 5. It is to be noted that the latter example is drawn in nonstaining black. In other words, this is one of the few forms of design that is common to two of our groups—black on white ware as well.

6 BOWL (minor restoration)

D 21, H 6.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.113

Reddish body. The base, slightly concave and beveled, is covered with engobe and has a few specks of glaze. The exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is undecorated. The rim has a line and sawtooth painted in ordinary black. The black of the rest of the decoration, heavily charged with chrome, stains the glaze a strong yellow. Beneath the sawtooth is a band of the pseudo writing seen on 1. Half-way down the wall is a band of pseudo Kufic, its "letters" consisting of a pair of vertical strokes decorated with dotted half-circles and a *kaf*-like form with a circled and dotted finial. On the bottom four black spots are joined by close parallel lines to make a cross. Crosslike forms are not rare in the present ware (see 15–18), but as they are not of the customary Nestorian shape (unlike the case in the buff ware), it is doubtful whether they have any religious significance. The drawing is of a similar bowl found in the



1:3

Qanat Tepe. A closely related form of the central cross appears in a Greek and Arabic text from Sinai of the ninth



or tenth century (K. Weitzmann in *Aus der Welt der Islamischen Kunst*, p. 311). The probable origin is that of four joined grape leaves, which persisted as such in early Islamic green-glazed molded ware. For an example from Susa: Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 4F.

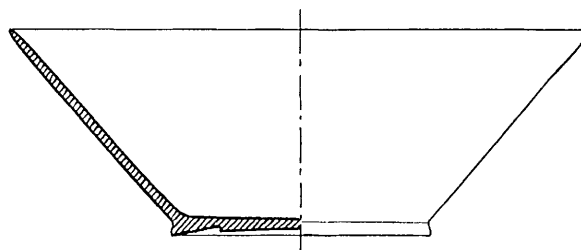
7 BOWL (restored)

D 25, H 6.5 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.148

Reddish body. Base missing. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is without decoration. Interior decorated entirely in yellow-staining black; the photograph, made with a color filter, gives some indication of the staining. On opposite sides at the rim are two lengths of sawtooth and subjoined bands of the pseudo writing discussed at 1. In this version the vertical strokes are more numerous. A few bristlelike strokes project downward from the base line. The two bands are closed at the ends, giving them a precise, limited length and neat appearance reminiscent of the "labels" at the rims of many black on white ware bowls. Between the bands are radial lengths of an ornamented guilloche; these lengths may or may not have been one, crossing the vessel from rim to rim.

8 BOWL

D 22, H 10.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.7

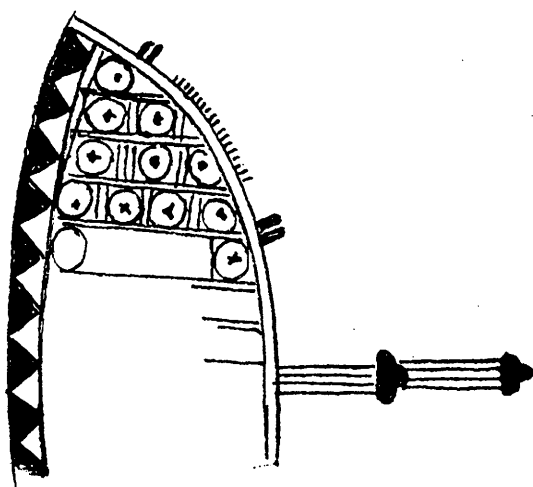


1:3

Buff body. Base, beveled, is without engobe but has an accidental splash of glaze. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is without decoration. Interior: a large motif in the form of a female breast (compare 1), doubtless duplicated on the missing opposite wall. The motif is edged with a sawtooth at the rim and filled with rows of the pseudo writing discussed at 1. In this version the dotted circles have become whorls. Beneath the breast, instead of the nipple seen on 1, there is a series of short, bent lines. Crossing the center of the bowl, rim to rim, is a line with added strokes on one side, probably a version of the miniature pseudo Kufic seen in both the black on white

ware (Group 3, 41) and the polychrome on white (Group 4, 39). For the use of this line on another bowl of the present ware, see 32. The decoration of 8 includes small triangles at the rim; undoubtedly these once numbered four.

The treatment of the breast as a decorative device is seen even more fantastically developed on a bowl, undoubtedly from Nishapur, that was recently on the market:

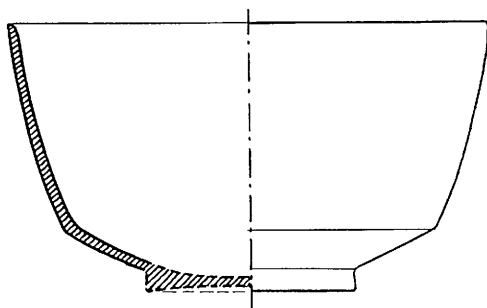


9 BOWL (base missing)

D 18.5, H 11 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan

MMA 39.40.11

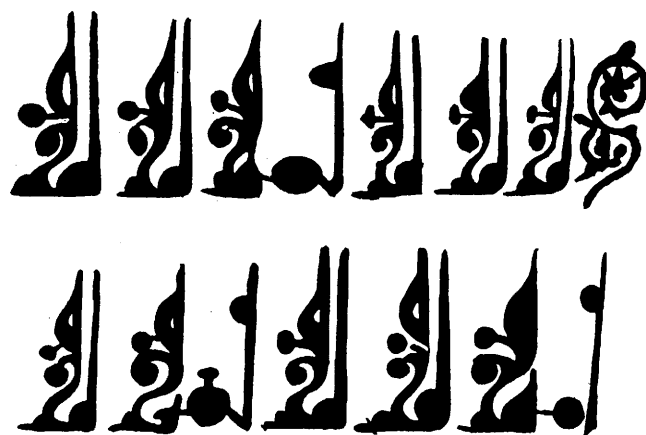
(Color Plate 9, page xx)



1:3

Red body. The interior, covered with engobe, is decorated with a ring of six circular blobs of pale yellow, about four and one-half centimeters in diameter. On the rim is a black line; on the exterior this becomes a series of half-moons. The principal decoration, painted like the rim in ordinary black, consists of an ornamental Kufic inscription containing the word *yumn* (happiness) preceded by two vertical letters, to each of which an elaborate half-palmette is added at the left bottom. The vertical letters probably represent the *alef* and *lam* of the definite article. The inscription is repeated once. Between the repetitions is a leafy curling form (visible at the right in the halftone illustration), at either side of which occurs an extra repetition of the *alef*-like letter. The arbitrary duplication of signs for purposes of symmetry also occurs on polychrome on white bowls made at the end of the tenth century and beginning of the

eleventh (Group 4, 13, 17). The central element of the leaf-palmettes of the letters on 9, a more or less circular form on a short stem resembling a berry, is also to be seen in the black on white ware (Group 3, 22). The spaces between the letters on 9 are filled with compartments that roughly follow the shapes of the letters and their ornaments. The compartments and their filling of loose circles



and curves are drawn in yellow-staining black. For a discussion of this type of filling see 10, where the drawing is neater. Probably end of tenth century.

10 a,b BOWL

D 18.5, H 5.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MIB

Red body. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is undecorated. At the rim, half-moons in nonstaining black. Around the wall, in the same black, a repeated Kufic "inscription," probably derived from the word *barakeh* (blessing). The style is mannered in that the vertical letters diminish in height as they progress. Their tops have almost circular additions instead of the more customary triangular projections (11) or foliations (9). Filling the spaces of the inscriptions are compartments, painted in yellow-staining black, that follow the shapes of the adjacent letters (compare 9). These forms, filled with small scrolls and curved lines, are related to those that appear in Fatimid luster bowls at the beginning of the eleventh century (Bahgat & Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, pls. xiv, no. 2, xxvi, no. 2, xxvii, no. 1; Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 23B). This does not necessarily imply a close connection between the potters of Egypt and Nishapur; rather, it illustrates the universality of certain motifs and modes of treatment. For a ninth-century version of the compartment, *Excavations at Samarra, 1936-1939*, II, pl. xcvi, top left. A related version occurs in the Nishapur buff ware (Group 1, 47). The decoration of the present piece includes a stylized bird drawn in nonstaining black. Such birds in their many variations are a common feature on Nishapur black on white bowls. Probably late tenth century.

11 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 19.2 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Red body. The shape, with shallow upturned rim, is also to be seen in the color-splashed ware (Group 2, 51) and the polychrome on white (Group 4, 32). Decoration: a black rim line and an "inscription," related to that of 10, painted in ordinary black, with compartments in yellow-staining black. The letters are of somewhat different form, having projecting spurs near their tops rather than the circular additions of 10. The compartments, filled with dots, contain peacock eyes that lack the central dot. This feature of "blind" peacock eyes also occurs in the slip-painted ware with colored engobe (Group 5, 8).

12 BOWL (base missing)

D 24.7, H 6.3 (approx.) cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.10

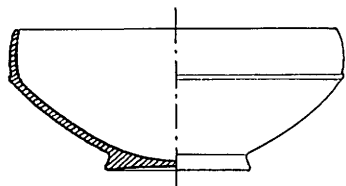
Red body. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is undecorated. Interior: a crude version of 10 and 11, with half-moons at the rim, a poorly drawn pseudo inscription, and dotted compartments containing peacock eyes. The disposition of the two blacks is the same as on the preceding pieces. The inscription is in some places an almost transparent brown, showing that the pigment contains little manganese and considerable iron. The piece was fired inverted, and some of the peacock eyes have run. The bottom may have been ornamented with a bird, circle, or curl. Several similar bowls found in Nishapur since 1940 have at the center an *alef* and a *lam*, doubtless a decadent form of the word *Allah*.

13 BOWL

D 18.5, H 7.4 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Red body. Wall flares from base, then rises nearly vertically. Black line on rim. Interior painted in ordinary brownish black with reserved circles. These spaces contain a cluster of four dotted circles drawn in yellow-staining black. The drawing of this ornament is here quite poor, as opposed to its use in the buff ware (Group 1, 62, among others). The exterior of 13 is decorated with ovals filled with vertical strokes (compare 1) alternating with an inverted trifoliate form that seems to be a survival from ninth-century luster ware (*Excavations at Samarra, 1936-1939*, II, pl. xciii, lower). Not earlier than late tenth century.

Fragments of other bowls were found as crudely deco-



1:3

rated as 13, also a fragment of a lid on which the reserved circles were left empty—a treatment also seen in the black on white ware (Group 3, 65). Of the same shape as 13 but with an emphasized change of angle was a small bowl from the Village Tepe, drawn above. It is decorated on the outside at the rim with simple blobs of black, the interior decoration somewhat resembling that of 14.

14 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 15 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 40.170.504

Red body, so poorly thrown that a supplementary lump of clay had to be added to the base. The base is partly covered with glaze. The exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is undecorated. The glaze is greenish, except where the decoration, all of which is painted in staining black, has colored it a deep yellow. This yellow is due to the presence of chromium in the black pigment. At the rim, a sawtooth. Beneath this, a hairline and a broad line. A large triangle, bounded by a broad line and a hairline, touches the rim at its points. In the one point that survives there is a triple curve in double outline, the center curve surmounted by a small pyramid of horizontal strokes. In the center of the triangle is a panel of the pseudo writing discussed at 1, bounded on one side by a heavy line. In the areas defined by the sides of the triangle is a heavily outlined motif consisting of a central "teardrop" from which two leaves project laterally, one with its serrations upward, the other with them downward. The ground of these side areas is filled with more of the whorl and line pseudo writing.

A similar but better-made bowl acquired by the Metropolitan in 1915 (15.85.1) was not then attributed to Nishapur, but its advent suggests that commercial digging was practiced in Nishapur long before the site became known in the trade. Such digging would also account for a typical Nishapur bowl decorated with yellow-staining black that is said to have come from Rayy (Péard, *Céramique*, pl. cxiii, top), although it is of course possible that this piece was anciently imported there.

15 BOWL (base and one side restored)

D 36, H 10.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.107

One of the largest bowls of this ware found, it not only has a wide flare but a very thin wall. Exterior undecorated. All painting in a black that barely stains yellow. At the rim, a sawtooth. Below this, a variation of the common pseudo Kufic, the motif here arranged as a series of vertical strips. A small cross instead of a dot appears in many of the circles. A smaller bowl found in the excavations, now in the Teheran museum, has the same decoration, including the sawtooth. Extending down the wall of 15 is a series of "columns." Although no other bowl was found with pre-

cisely this motif, compare a similar element on a Nishapur bowl decorated with stylized breasts, mentioned at 8. The "column" motif was not new when used in the yellow-staining black ware, since it appears on a Sasanian metal dish (Smirnov, *Argenterie orientale*, pl. LXXVII, no. 135). The pyramids of dotted scalelike forms at the bases of the columns are a frequent motif in this ware (16, 18, 32). Alternating with the columns is a crosshatched form, either a lozenge or an enclosure made of opposed ogee curves, to which are attached four pyramidal forms in a cross arrangement. This device, variants of which occur on 17 and 18, also occurs on a fragment of a bowl with red engobe (Group 5, 53) on which the drawing is done in yellow-staining black on areas of white slip. Further variants occur in the glazed pottery of Afrasiyab (Maysuradze, "Afrasiyab," pl. IX, upper) and, with eight instead of four pyramidal forms, in the glazed pottery of Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 244, fig. 15).

16 BOWL FRAGMENT

W of fragment 31 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Judging from the surviving portion, the exterior was undecorated. Glaze has spalled, a common occurrence in this ware. All painting in staining black. At the rim, the usual sawtooth. Beneath this, a band filled with a group of tightly wound spirals alternating with a group of small circles in pairs, one above the other; the circles contain small strokes and the pairs are separated by two vertical lines. On the wall, appearing four times, is a motif consisting of a lozenge with three large spots attached by hairlines to each of its points. Small circles attached to the spots suggest that they represent fruit. The lozenge and the hairlines are adorned with bristlelike strokes. On the bottom is a strongly drawn circle filled with crosshatching, the squares of which are dotted. Projecting from the circle are four pyramids of the dotted "scale" motif seen on 15. These alternate with a plantlike motif consisting of three lines, each of which terminates in a triangular group of short crosslines.

The lozenge motif on the wall, not found in any other ware in Nishapur, was known in Transoxiana, a bowl in the Samarkand museum, ascribed to the "Soghdian Period," having a somewhat related decoration in red, black, and green (Field & Prostov, *Ars Islamica*, V, p. 246, fig. 10). In a Russian publication, Pugachenkova & Rempel, *History of Art of Uzbekistan*, this piece (fig. 194) is dated to the tenth or eleventh century.

17 BOWL FRAGMENT

W of fragment 17.1 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.646

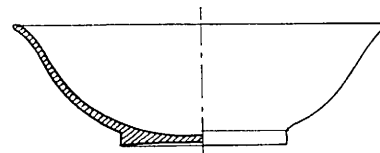
A portion of this fragment is in the Teheran museum.

Base, covered with engobe and glaze, is beveled, but the piece is so made that it rests on the circular pad in the center rather than on the outer ring. All painting in staining black. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is decorated with groups of fine parallel lines, drawn from the rim at a slant in increasing lengths. A similar exterior decoration occurs in the slip-painted ware with colored engobe (Group 5, 4, 5). Interior: two radial panels, opposite one another, heavily outlined and with somewhat pointed lower ends, filled with a version of the familiar ornament derived from pseudo Kufic. Crossing the center of the bowl between the panels is a row of three crosslike figures (originally more than three?) composed of four pyramidal forms connected by pairs of parallel lines (center figure) or three divergent lines that are in turn connected by hatching. A variant of the latter form occurs on 18. On the bottom of 17 are the marks of a stilt.

18 BOWL

D 15.5 ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Lip strongly outcurved. Rare in this ware, such a lip is more often seen on small dishes that have a colored engobe (Group 5, 11, 13, 21, 24). Exterior undecorated. Decoration on interior entirely in yellow-staining black. A panel filled with a variant of the pattern seen on 17 crosses the center of the bowl. On one side only there is a pyramid of the scale motif seen on 15 and 16. On the wall, poorly drawn, a variant of one of the crosslike forms seen on 17. A number of small bowls resembling 18 were found, including one from the Qanat Tepe:



1:3

19 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 12.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

All painting in staining black. A hairline is drawn beneath the customary sawtooth. Similar lines in conjunction with a sawtooth occur on 1, 3, 14, and 26. The principal decoration is a band containing four-lobed figures on a ground of the familiar dotted circle and line motif, with the circles here becoming mere scribbles. Although the contrast between the bold figures and delicate detail is not uninteresting, this sort of decoration is rarely drawn with sufficient skill to be truly attractive.

20 BOWL (base missing)

D 14.7 cm; Sabz Pushan

MIB

Interior undecorated. Exterior: three horizontal rows of circles with central dots, painted entirely in staining black. The contrast between heavy and light lines, customary in this ware, is here absent.

21 DISH FRAGMENT

D 11.5, H 4 cm; exact provenance unknown

MMA 38.40.387

Poorly made, with rough base. Base is covered with engobe and glaze. Exterior undecorated. Interior: crudely painted radial bands define quadrants and give the effect of interweaving at the center. Two of the quadrants are filled with curling stems that end in trefoils. Three half-moons appear at the rim of the only complete alternate quadrant. The painting described thus far is in ordinary black. In the alternate quadrants, in staining black, is a roughly triangular compartment filled with loosely drawn dotted circles.

22 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 11 cm; Vineyard Tepe

MMA 40.170.464

Smooth pinkish buff body, not characteristic of Nishapur. The exterior, judging from this fragment, was undecorated. Interior: fantastic birds, intervening compartments filled with dots and peacock eyes, and the usual sawtooth at the rim. The thin outlines of the compartments and the decoration within them are in staining black; the rest is in thick ordinary black (which areas alone still retain any glaze). The birds, with large, unnaturally placed, spot-filled wings, resemble less certain birds in the buff ware (Group 1, 81, 83) than some drawn in white slip on bowls with a purplish black engobe (Group 5, 5). It is not yet possible to say whether such pieces as 22 were made in Nishapur, as is probable, or were imported there.

In the period since 1940 similar bowls, reputedly and probably found in Nishapur, have come to light. One (unpublished) in the C. L. David Collection, Copenhagen, is decorated with two birds whose dot-filled wings are attached, one at the neck, one at the tail. A similar bowl (unpublished) is in the Ettinghausen collection. In the Erickson collection is a bowl with a single bird, its wings, each filled with a half-palmette, attached near its neck with long strokes. In the Berlin museum is a bowl with a single bird, one of whose wings is filled with a half-palmette, the other with spots (Erdmann, *Berliner Museum*, X, p. 8, fig. 2). In the Seattle Art Museum (Wilkinson, *Iranian Ceramics*, pl. 29) is a bowl with a more developed and sophisticated design than any of the foregoing. On this single bird with crested head are wings that contain

two half-palmettes joined back to back; with their various supplemental lines, the wings themselves resemble birds.

23 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 11 cm; Tepe Madraseh

MMA 40.170.514

Reddish buff, slightly gritty body. Shallow upturned rim. On the exterior the engobe extends only a short distance down, but the glaze descends to the base. Interior, in staining black: a radial band (probably one of four, forming quadrants) and a pattern of the familiar whorl and line motif, drawn on a larger scale than usual. Carnelian red slip has been introduced in the radial band, for which reason the piece can be looked on as a link between the present ware and the polychrome on white.

24 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 12 cm; Tepe Madraseh

MMA 40.170.572

Another fragment of this bowl is in the Teheran museum. Well turned, with thin wall. The glaze has spalled, taking with it some of the engobe and exposing the reddish body. The staining pigment is in color unlike the staining black of Nishapur, and it has none of that black's typical specks. It is also unlike the greenish yellow-staining pigment so common in Afrasiyab. Much browner than usual, it barely stains the glaze. The rim of this once large bowl was decorated with parallel slanting strokes placed between two circumscribing lines. The style of the foliated curl enclosed in compartments on the wall is related to the incised decoration on a waster of alkaline-glazed ware (Group 11, 50) and indicates a date not earlier than the eleventh century. The resemblance does not necessarily mean that 24 was made in Nishapur or that it was of precisely the same date. Another bowl of the present ware, 3, also has a link with the alkaline-glazed ware.

25 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 11.5 cm; Sabz Pushan

MMA 40.170.510

Reddish body. Exterior, covered with engobe and glaze, is undecorated. Dark lines around the rim probably divided the design into a number of petallike forms with ogee tops, perhaps in the manner of a bowl that was probably made in Afrasiyab (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 19A). Such shapes occasionally occur in the buff ware (Group 1, 87). The dark lines of 25, painted in ordinary black that has a brown tinge, retain the glaze; elsewhere it has disintegrated. The decoration beneath the dark lines, drawn in staining black, consists of forms resembling acacia seeds in reserve against a loose version of the dotted circle and line motif.

26 FRAGMENT

W 16.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.512

Another fragment of this piece is in the Teheran museum. Reddish body. Exterior undecorated. Painted entirely in staining black. At the rim, a sawtooth with a hairline added beneath it (compare 1, 3, 14, 19), below which is a band made up of a half-leaf of a rare form. Placed within this motif (visible particularly at the right) is a group of closely drawn short strokes, a feature of this ware (compare 14, central figure; 16, plantlike motif around center circle and details on lozenge).

27 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 11.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.505

Reddish buff body with engobe on exterior only. The thin coat of clear glaze, which covers the interior as well as the exterior, is tinted a strong yellow on the exterior by the blackish spots, which form a decoration of the simplest kind.

28 LID

D 10 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 37.40.20

A similar lid is in the Teheran museum. The knob is painted in the ordinary black, as is the line at the rim. The rest of the decoration, a band of the common line and whorl motif, is painted in yellow-staining black. Probably intended to cover a vessel of the shape of 30. Fragments were also found of much larger lids in this ware, evidently intended to cover bowls. These were similar in shape to color-splashed graffiato lids (Group 2, 38, 39). One had a decoration consisting of the four-circle motif seen in the reserved circles of 13 in the present group.

29 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 19.7 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.147

Reddish body. Base has shallow bevel. Exterior undecorated. Glaze completely disintegrated. Interior: a half-palmette followed by a group of strong radial strokes, half-moons at the rim above the half-palmette, a heavy circumscribing line around the bottom. The tip of the half-palmette has within it, in reserve, a many-leaved half-palmette, an interesting artistic conception. The decoration thus far noted is in ordinary black. The spaces between the half-palmette and the radial strokes are occupied by outlined compartments filled with dots and peacock eyes, painted in staining black. A small dotted triangular form in the same black appears above the initial curl of the half-palmette.

30 VASE

H 13.6, D 10.2 cm ; near shrine of Muhammad Mahruq
(surface find)
MIB

Body tapers to narrow neck with encircling convex ring, neck flares widely. No other vessel of this shape was found in Nishapur. Glaze has spalled, carrying away much of the engobe. The main divisions of the design, painted in a heavy brownish black, form circles and bands. These are filled with loosely drawn details in yellow-staining black, including a cable motif around the neck, circular forms above it, and vaguely suggested writing beneath it.

31 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 9.4 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.105

Reddish body. The base, slightly concave, has no engobe or glaze. The inscription, painted in yellow-staining black, has so far not been read. No other piece of pottery was found in Nishapur decorated with this particular cursive script. The dark area above the writing—an island not covered by the engobe but only by the glaze—shows the potter's carelessness.

32 BOWL FRAGMENT

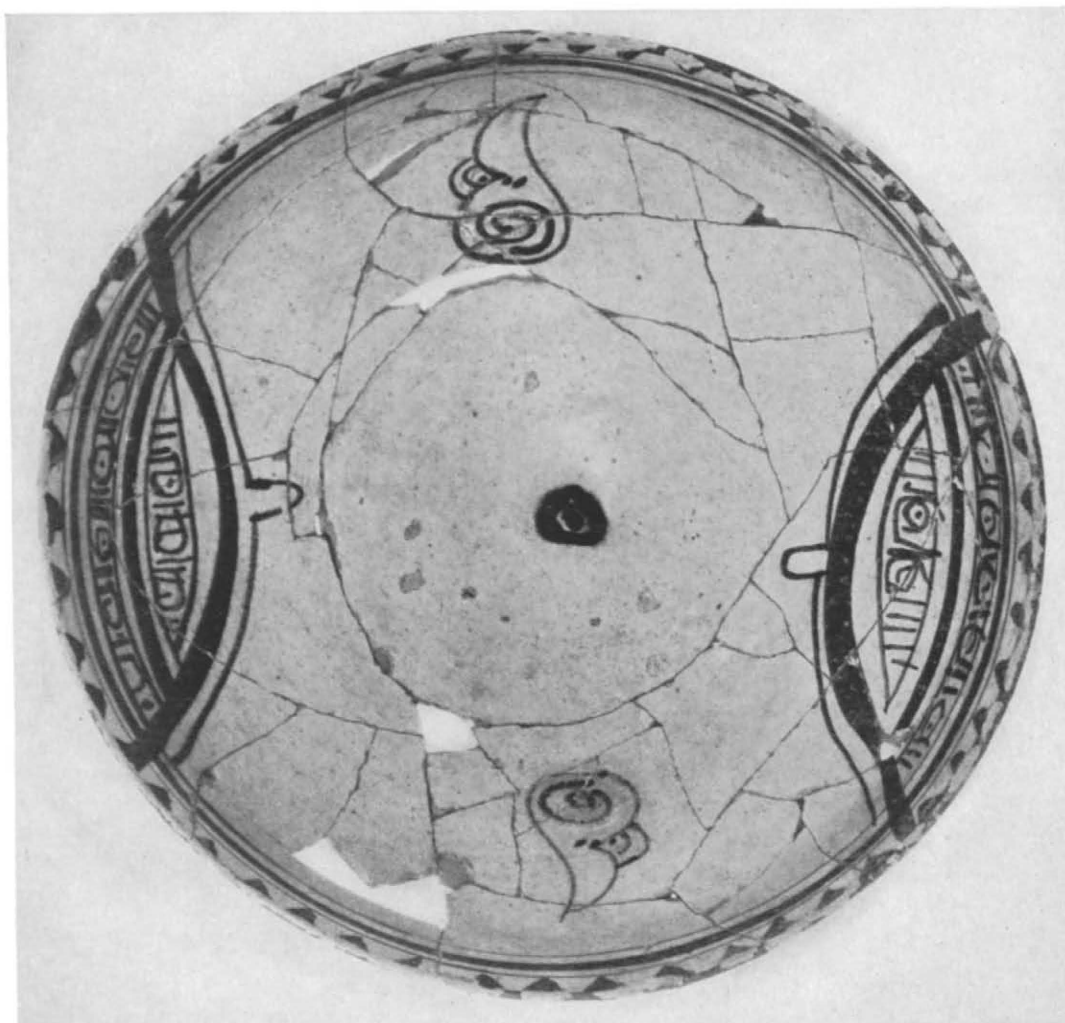
W 20 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.511

Another fragment of this bowl, which was probably a large one like 15, is in the Teheran museum. Reddish buff body, pinkish surface. Glaze, with hair cracks, has spalled in places, taking the engobe with it. Exterior undecorated. Interior decorated entirely in yellow-staining black: a sawtooth at the rim, beneath which is a line of what appears to be simulated writing, based on the letter *kaf*. Next, a line with bristlelike projections (compare 8), probably an imitation of miniature Kufic writing. Beneath this is a band filled with the dotted circle and line motif. A triangular compartment extending downward from this band is filled with dotted crosshatching (compare 16). Projecting from this is a pyramid of dotted "scales," as on 15, 16, 18.

33 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 13.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Nothing remains of the decoration but part of a debased Kufic inscription, painted in yellow-staining black. The erroneous dotting of the letters shows that the potter was illiterate.



1a



1b



3



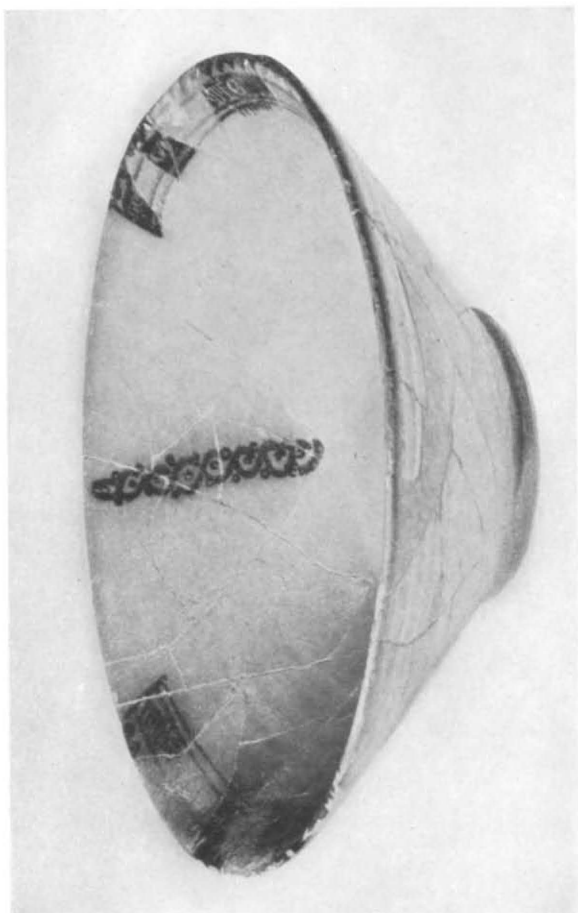
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2



4



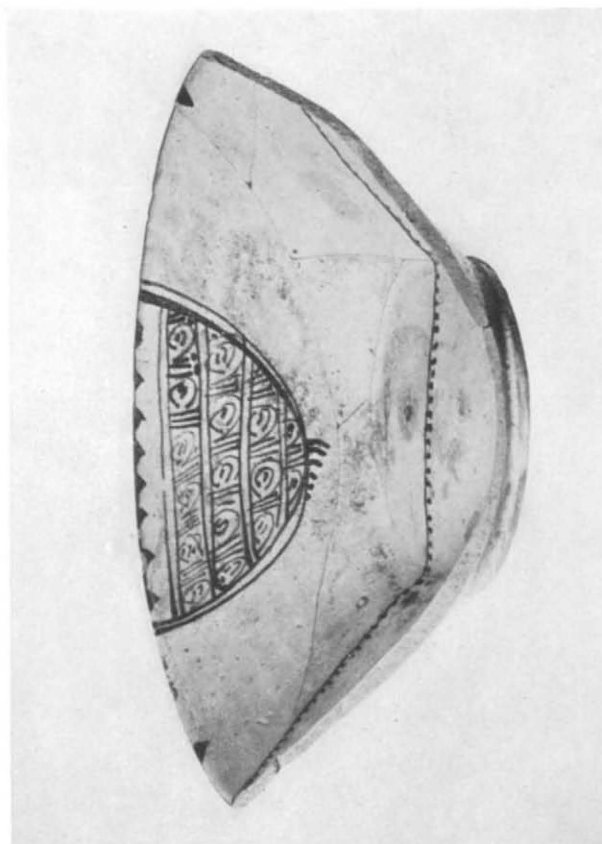
7



6



6



6

10a



11



10b



12



13



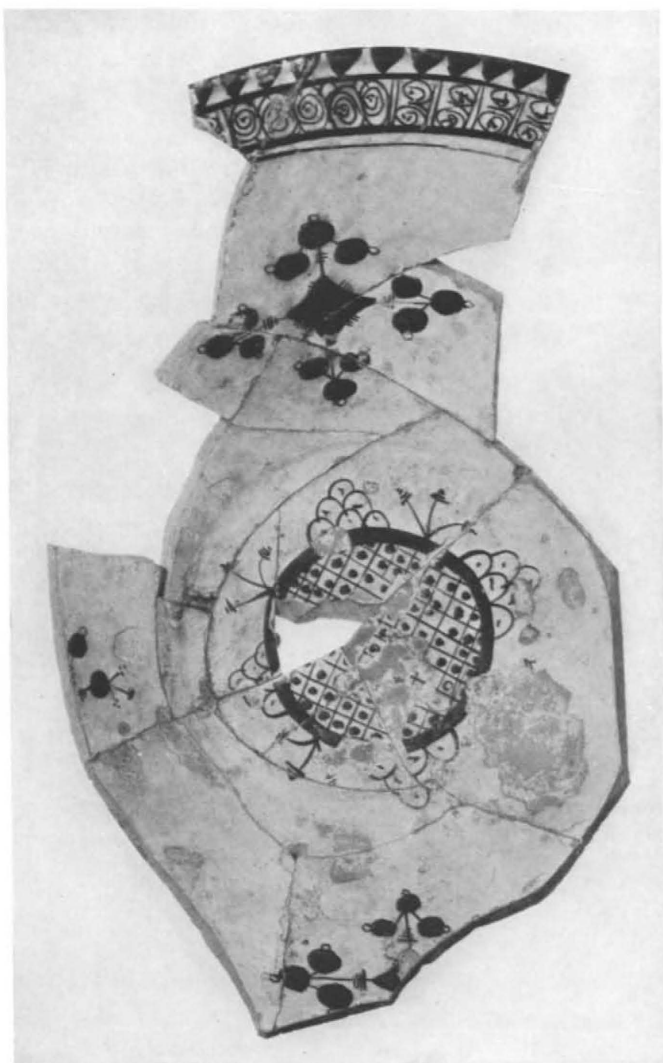
14





15

16



17



18



19, 20



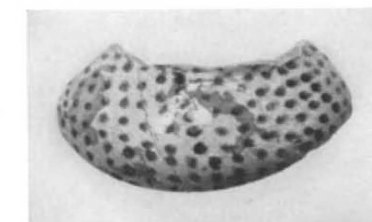
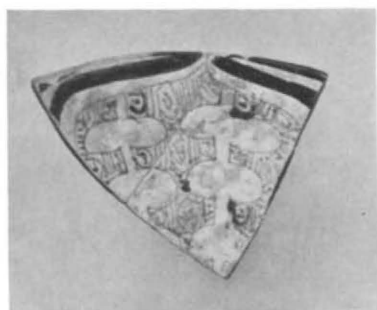
21

22, 23



24

25, 26



27

28, 29



30

31, 32



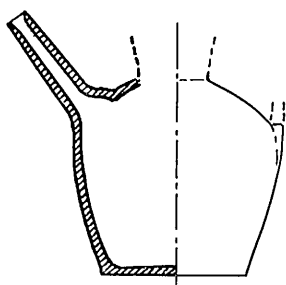
33

9

Monochrome Ware

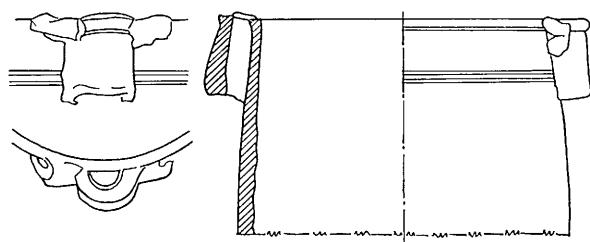
A considerable number of vessels found in Nishapur were decorated with a lead glaze of a single color, applied either on a white or a colored engobe, and occasionally directly on the clay surface. This application of a colored glaze, an innovation in the pottery of eastern Iran in the ninth century, had been a common practice in other parts of the Islamic world. Even earlier, in the Sasanian period, monochrome pottery had been made in Iraq. It was also used, and perhaps made, in Susa, a center that had long enjoyed trade connections with Mesopotamia. But on the plateau of Iran, north and east of Susa, the early monochrome ware was known only by a few imports. That such was the case is evident from the very few monochrome glazed pieces found by the Metropolitan's excavations at Qasr-i-abu Nasr, some of which are of the Parthian period (Upton, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, December, 1934, p. 16, fig. 24, no. 3).

The monochrome vessels found in Nishapur were made in the ninth century and later. They include bowls, dishes and assemblies of dishes, jars, pitchers, ewers, and lamps. Occasionally only single examples were found of a particular shape, such as that of a small spouted pitcher

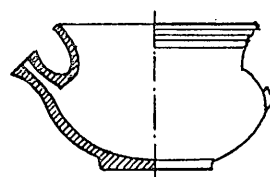


1:3

from the Qanat Tepe. Another unusual vessel was a "casserole"-like piece with two semicircular lugs. Another variation of this form, glazed chocolate brown, with straight rather than flaring sides, was found in the kiln area. Certain peculiarities can be noted in the shapes of this ware. None of the bowls, for example, has a foot ring. A flattened, slightly projecting rim, to give another example, is common to most of the green-glazed deep bowls, jars, and pitchers. There seems to have been an association

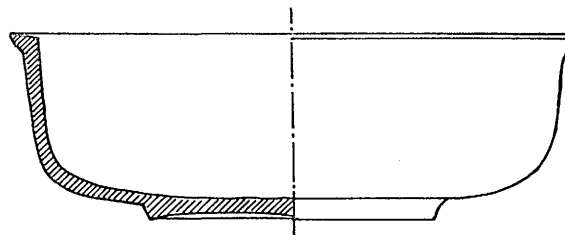


1:3



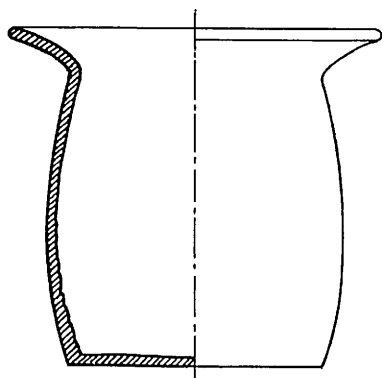
1:3

between shape and color. Green, by far the most popular color, was apparently favored for small jars and pitchers as well as for lamps. Although jars of all sizes were glazed green, brown appears only on jars of medium and small size. Bowls with flaring sides and a vertical rim, 33 for example, are never found colored green. Bowls with low



1:3

vertical sides are not glazed green but brown and seem to be of a later period. An instance of a special shape with a wide flaring rim was found at a deep level in the Village Tepe. It was duplicated, almost exactly, a few centuries later in alkaline glaze in an example found at the East Kilns (see drawing, page 260). In Nishapur blue seems hardly to have been used in the ninth and tenth centuries. The color was not possible to achieve with copper in a lead glaze, and during this period cobalt was not used in Khurasan. Later, when glazes that were substantially alkaline were employed and a new body was



1:3

introduced to which the alkaline glaze "fitted," cobalt was much in vogue. The vessels colored with cobalt are included, therefore, in Group 11. A fair number of vessels were discovered that were glazed brown, the color sometimes a rich chocolate. Some, mostly small and of poor quality, were not given an engobe and had a colorless glaze applied directly to the surface; they have a light yellowish color. Of those that are a deep brown some were covered by a glaze that itself contained the coloring metallic base; it is sometimes difficult to tell whether the glaze has acquired its color directly from the admixture of a manganese base or indirectly from a colored engobe containing manganese. Manganese gives the brown a cold cast. The hue varies somewhat. Occasionally the glaze is flecked with blackish spots, perhaps unintended and due to insufficient grinding of the metallic oxides, or intended and due to a purposeful addition of iron.

Usually, the technique of using a colored engobe was employed for vessels that were embellished with slip painting in white and sometimes with red also, the ware thus classifiable as polychrome with colored engobe (Group 5). Dark brown seems to have been used for shallow dishes and for widely flaring bowls but not for those of hemispherical shape. It was not favored either for small pinch-spouted lamps, but it was used for flower-pots. Inasmuch as the potters of Nishapur made graffiato ware covered by a transparent glaze splashed with colors, it would have been strange indeed if they had not also applied colorless glaze over a scratched decoration.

By far the most popular color for these glazed monochrome graffiato vessels was green, but vessels so decorated seem never to have equaled the popularity of the color-splashed graffiato wares (Group 2). To a modern eye it is strange that a monochrome glaze was appreciated so much less than a color-splashed, since it produces a simpler, less confusing effect when applied over a scratched decoration. The graffiato lines, thanks to the exposure of the clay body and the local thickness of the glaze, appear black. The ware was always fired inverted, and the extra thickness of glaze resulting at the rim

becomes almost black, and so is in harmony with the scratched designs.

The designs of the green-glazed graffiato ware are seldom identical to those of the color-splashed ware. In the green-glazed ware there is a great use of spiral curls and of circular forms filled with roughly drawn foliate forms. Although compartments appear, they occur less frequently, and in no case are they so elegantly drawn as in the best of the color-splashed pieces. The tendency is for the designs to be looser. A feature lacking in the color-splashed ware is introduced here, even though it is rare: Kufic writing, which can be both delicate and graceful (44).

Green-glazed graffiato bowls were also made in Afrasiyab, but with decoration of a different sort (Erdmann, *Bulletin of the Iranian Institute*, VI, p. 103, fig. 2). They are distinguished by their designs, which are on a larger scale. Introduced in the flowing curves is hatching, cut in short, straight strokes, such as appears also in the color-splashed ware of Afrasiyab (Group 2, 59). Another distinguishing feature is the lack of glaze on the exterior. The Afrasiyab ware is usually unglazed except at the rim, whereas the Nishapur ware is glazed from the rim to the base. Certain motifs—a cable pattern, for one—seem to be common to both centers. Doubtless Nishapur and Afrasiyab each produced for its own market, even if a few pieces undoubtedly traveled between the two cities.

As with the color-splashed ware, there is no relationship between the green-glazed graffiato ware of Nishapur and those of northwest Iran of the Garrus and Yasukand regions (Pope, *Survey*, V, pls. 612-615 A, 617 B, 618, 620 B), which feature carved, rather than scratched, designs. A very few vessels found in Nishapur, instead of having an incised decoration beneath a green glaze, had one that can better be described as cut (55). Examples of this technique have been found in Iraq and Turkestan as well as in Iran; the rarity of such pieces in Nishapur suggests that they were not actually made there.

Molded pottery was also covered with a green glaze, and of this a few sherds were unearthed; again, these were so few in number that local manufacture seems doubtful.

In general it may be said that yellow glaze was not used in Nishapur to cover graffiato designs. A large bowl so glazed (50) was surely an import. A few stray sherds, glazed yellow, dating from the eleventh or twelfth century, are of uncertain origin. Also of this late period are a few sherds of graffiato ware (60) with a purple glaze, possibly made locally. This possibility is suggested by the discovery of a waster with purple glaze, having a white composed body, collapsed in a sagger (Group 11, 76). A peculiarity of certain of these late graffiato pieces is the presence of rather strongly incised rings near the

rim (51, 59, 63). The glaze of this subgroup is colorless, so that the design appears as pale brown against a white ground. The shape, with small base and convex wall—often turned thin with a slightly thickened rim—is not typical of the tenth century in Nishapur but approaches that of the alkaline-glazed ware of the late eleventh or twelfth century. The loose, leafy forms of the color-splashed ware (Group 2) do not generally figure in the decoration of these uncolored pieces, spiral curls or deeply incised foliations taking their place. In exceptional pieces (63) the incised forms are similar to those seen in the alkaline-glazed ware (Group 11). Furthermore, the Arabic writing, in Kufic (59, 63) or Naskhi

(52), can be distinguished from that on other Nishapur wares, including the black on white, by such details as the rounded forms of 59 and the proportions of the letters on 63, of which the verticals are short, without unduly exaggerated triangular tops. It is far from certain that the monochrome pieces just described were made in Nishapur. The rarity is such as to make it less than likely. On the other hand, the resemblances are not very close to certain bowls from Yasukand on which the wall decoration does consist of an inscription and on which there also appears a double line near the rim (Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 619 A).

1 PITCHER (minor restoration)

H 31, D 24.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MMA 40.170.82

Red body, buff engobe, strong green glaze. Base slightly concave. A circumscribing groove on the shoulder, two at the collar. Surmounting the handle is a flat disk. The top of the pitcher is in the form of an animal's head. Its horns curl horizontally, forming an open loop; the tips project upward at an angle. A strip of clay is applied along the length of its nose—the pitcher's spout. Probably tenth century.

A related find was an earthenware ram's head of about the same size, glazed brown (MMA 40.170.515), but since this was unpierced, it could only have been a decorative feature.

In Merv, a spout in the form of a head also had added decoration on the top of the nose (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 314, fig. 55). This piece, perhaps of the twelfth century, is unglazed.

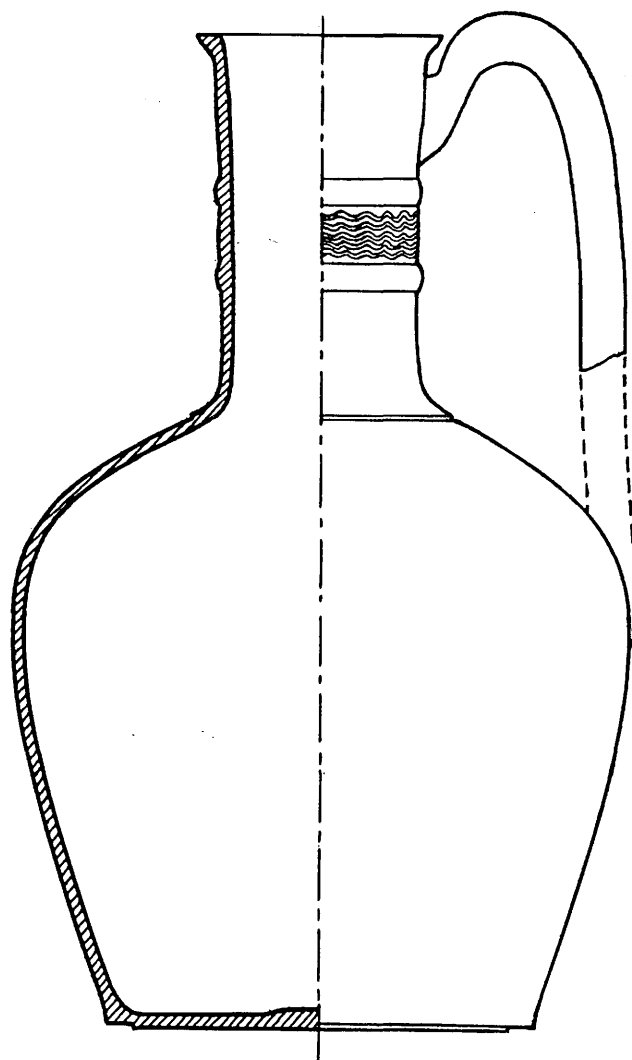
For an animal-headed pitcher in the buff ware of Nishapur, see Group 1, 72, where a number of such pitchers and spouts from other sites, including one with green glaze, are mentioned.

2 PITCHER

H 27, D 16.4 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MMA 40.170.85

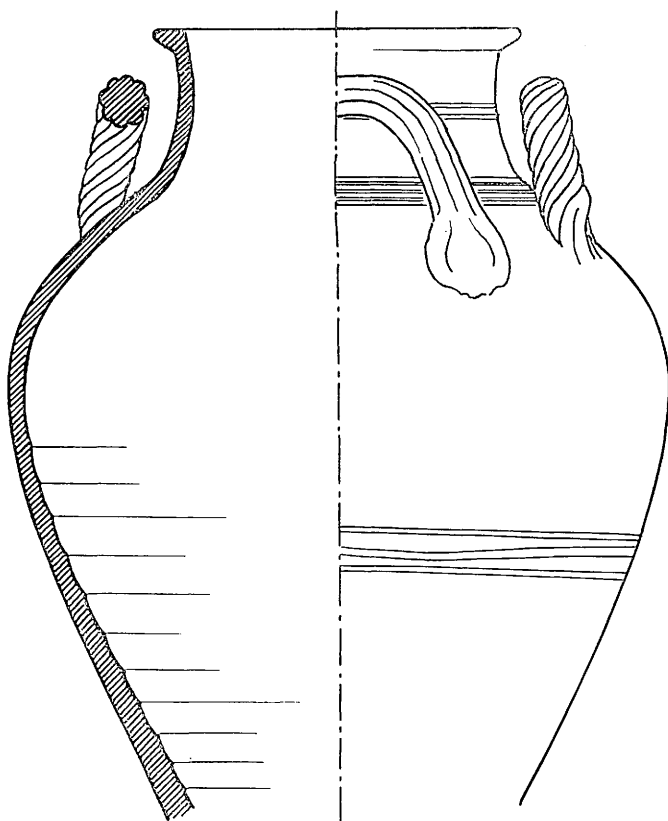
Buff clay, no engobe, green glaze. Thinly turned. Base flat, a slight projection, four millimeters wide, at the edge. The flat lip projects slightly. Two projecting bands encircle the neck; combed lines decorate the space between them. The sides of the vessel are chattered, doubtless as a decoration, which treatment is often encountered in the unglazed pitchers of Nishapur.



2 1:2

3 FOUR-HANDLED JAR

H 30.2, D 26 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB



1:3

Red core, buff surface, strong green glaze. Flat, projecting rim. Two of the handles are plain, two are twisted like ropes. Probably not earlier than late tenth century. Rope-like handles were known in pre-Islamic pottery (Debevoise, *Parthian Pottery*, p. 14, fig. 2).

4 THREE-HANDLED JAR (one handle missing)

H 31, D 24.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

Red body. Glaze, considerably disintegrated, is bluish green, indicating presence of alkali. Flat disks surmount the handles (compare 1). Flat, projecting rim. A groove encircles the neck at the upper attachment of the handles, another encircles the shoulder at the lower attachment. Probably eleventh century.

5 PITCHER

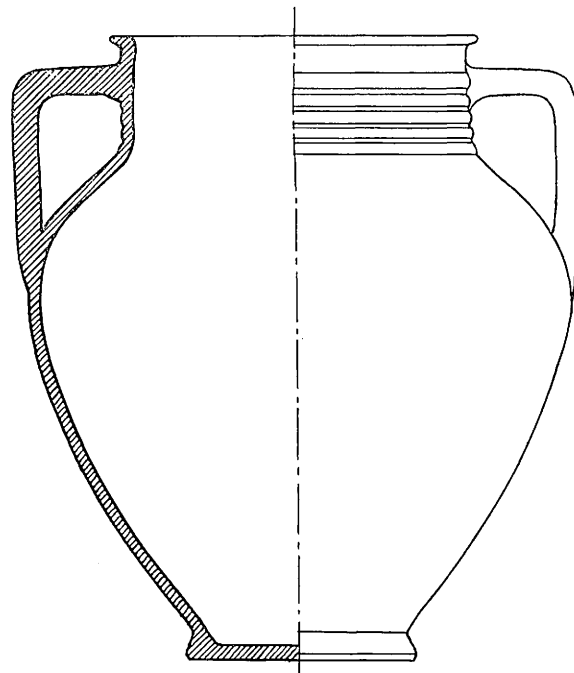
H 16.6, D 12.3 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Red core, buff surface, greenish yellow glaze. Projecting rim, poorly fashioned. Eleventh century.

6 TWO-HANDLED JAR

H 15, W 15 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

Reddish clay, green glaze. Flattened rim projects slightly. Larger green-glazed two-handled jars with grooved necks



1:3

were found in Sabz Pushan. These glazed, nonporous jars were for liquids other than water. Somewhat similar two-handled jars, made with thinner walls, were left unglazed so that evaporation through the clay would cool the water stored within them.

7 JAR

H 15.3, D 11.7 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Red body, no engobe, green glaze. Flat, projecting rim. Poorly made. Location indicates eleventh century.

8 PITCHER

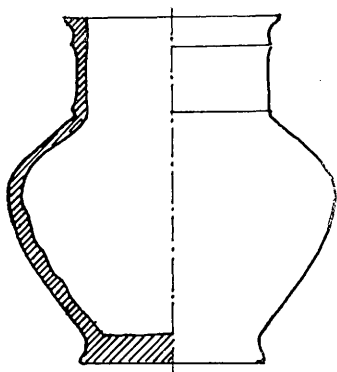
H 12.5, D 10.95 cm ; South Horn
MIB

Reddish body, green glaze. The pitcher tapers down from a high shoulder, the neck is almost vertical, and the lip projects slightly. A single handle joins neck to shoulder. A very common shape in Nishapur. Contrary to custom, the glaze does not extend to the foot.

9 JAR

H 13, D 12 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Reddish body, green glaze. Flat, projecting rim. The body tapers less severely than that of 8. A very common shape in Nishapur. A drawing of a similar jar is shown:



Red body, thin, light buff engobe. Green glaze. The piece is asymmetrical, the foot, poorly fashioned, projects beyond the line of the wall. The base is flat. The rim projects and slopes downward. A groove encircles the middle of the neck.

12 JAR

H 12.5, W 10.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
Discarded

Red body, green glaze. The jar has a slight projecting collar, the neck is concave. Other jars of this sharply tapered shape, and as poorly made, were glazed brown. Tenth century.

1:3

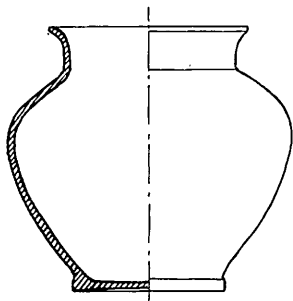
13 JAR

H 12.4, W 9.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Red core, buff surface, green glaze. Flat, projecting rim. The shoulder is high and rounded, the base flat. Ninth or tenth century. A similar example is in the Metropolitan

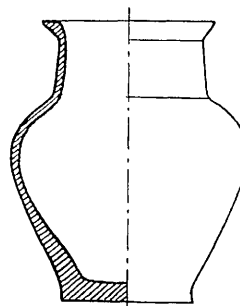
10 JAR

H 11.2, W 11 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.12



1:3

Buff body, thin buff engobe. Green glaze on exterior. Interior unglazed. A few streaks of glaze on the flat base. Thinly turned. Location indicates ninth century. Small jars of similar shape occur in the unglazed ware (Group 12, 91).

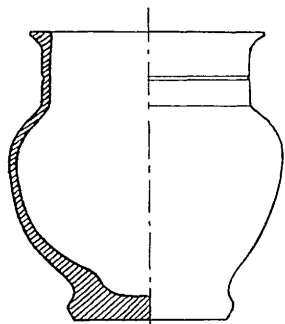


1:3

(39.40.78). Such jars were also provided with a pair of handles, one such was found at Sabz Pushan.

11 JAR

H 12, W 10.9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.83



1:3

14 TWO-SPOUTED LAMP (handle restored)

L 14.5, H 4.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 39.40.46

Buff body, green glaze of dull hue, due to absence of engobe. Body decorated with a wreathlike band of indented V-shapes. Lamps of similar shape, though with only one spout, were also found. Lamps were found in a tenth-century kiln in Paikand, near Bukhara, their decoration simpler in that the indentations are not V-shaped but are vertical (Kondratieva, *Trudy*, V p. 226, pl. VIII, 1). It is probable that lamps such as 14 came to Nishapur as part of the gear of merchants or other travelers from Transoxiana.

15 LAMP

L 14, H 7.6 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 37.40.1

Red core, buff surface, strong green glaze. The open spout and the loop handle rising well above the rim are characteristic of lamps of the ninth and tenth centuries (see also 16, 18, 19), whereas lamps of the eleventh and twelfth centuries typically have the sides of their spouts pinched together and are furnished with small loop handles that do not project above the rim (Group 11, 9).

For a lamp found in Russian Turkestan shaped like 15, with ornamental indentations around the central opening, see Iakubovski, *Hermitage Museum: Works of the Oriental Dept.*, II, pl. x.

16 LAMP

L 11.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Buff body, dark green glaze. A light, thinly made piece. Lamps of this shape sometimes have a row of five simple indentations on either side of the central opening.

17 LAMP (most of handle restored)

H 9.7, D of bottom 13.7 cm ; Tepe Madrasah
MMA 40.170.288

Reddish body, thin buff engobe, green glaze. The actual base, nine centimeters in diameter, is slightly concave. Lamps with a central column were made in the color-splashed ware of Nishapur (none illustrated) and the alkaline-glazed ware (Group 11, 5, 25). They were also made in Lashkari Bazar (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, pl. xxviii, no. 548).

18 LAMP

L 14, H 5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.297

Reddish core, buff surface. Strong green glaze. Glaze covers the whole of the base.

19 LAMP

L 20 cm ; Tepe Madrasah
MIB

Red body, buff engobe, green glaze. The spout was originally long, after the fashion of 16. The domed top is a rare feature in Nishapur.

20 LAMP

L 7, H 3 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 39.40.17

Reddish clay, green glaze. Made without a handle. Lamps similar to this but with a higher base and glazed light blue, rather than green, were found at Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, p. 26, fig. 74; *Excavations at Samarra, 1936-1939*, II, pls. liv, lx). The small lamps of Samarra were often circular and in many instances had a tablike handle.

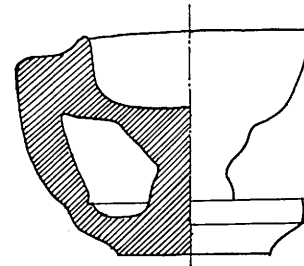
21 LAMP

L 8 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

Green glaze, spout blackened by use. Crudely made, the handle merely a pinched piece of clay. A lamp of the same shape but only four and one-half centimeters long was also unearched; despite its small size, it had been used.

22 LAMP

L 8, H 6 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.28



1:2

Red core, white engobe. Because of the engobe, the glaze, where it is in good condition, is a rather sharp green. Crudely made. Shows signs of use. Small glazed lamps with such bases are still made at Istalif, Afghanistan (E. K. Maillart, *The Cruel Way*, London, 1947, p. 182, ill. 3).

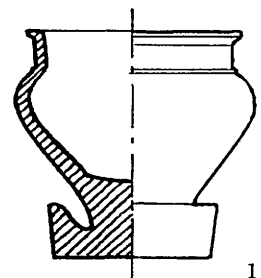
23 MINIATURE JAR

H 6.4 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Yellowish clay, green glaze. Flat, slightly projecting lip. Perhaps used as a lamp, as was 24.

24 LAMP

H 5.8 cm ; Tepe Madrasah
MMA 39.40.133

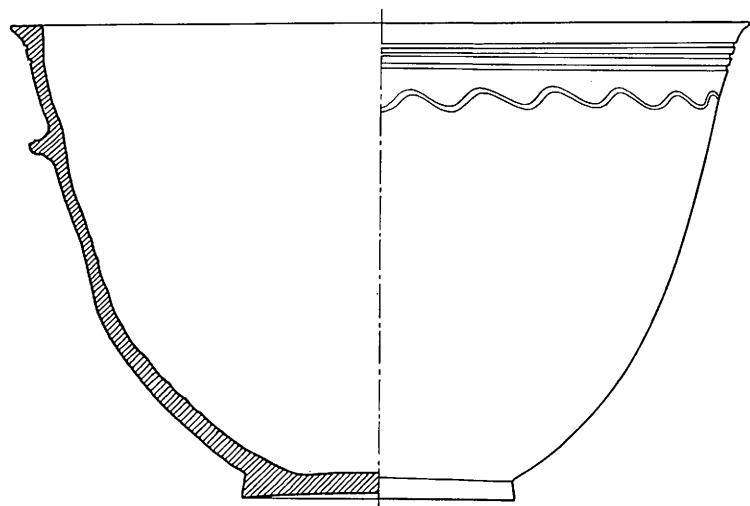


1:2

Yellowish clay, green glaze. Flat, slightly projecting lip. Troughed foot, flat base. A slight ridge at the base of the neck. Used as a lamp, some blackening remaining.

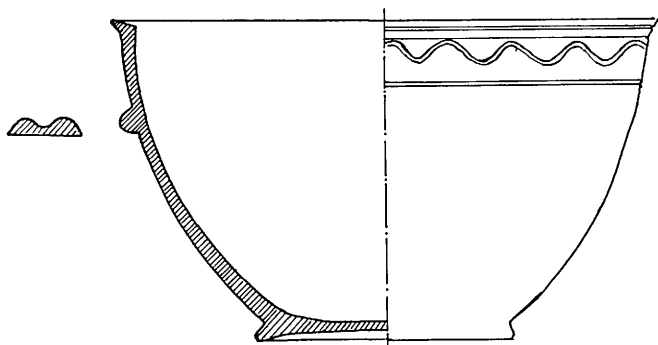
25 BOWL

H 25, D 39 cm ; Tepe Madrasah
MIB



1:4

Red core, buff surface, green glaze. No engobe, consequently the green is dull. The largest vessel of this ware found. A mark encircling the body indicates that a string was tied around the bowl to give support during manufacture. Base slightly concave. Flat, projecting rim. Three encircling grooves immediately below the rim. Beneath these, a wavy groove. The bowl is unusual in that it is furnished with a simple lug (visible at the right in the illustration). Found in a location indicating tenth century. A similar bowl, in the Teheran museum, is only half as high, with green glaze, almost identical grooves, a single lug, and an exceptionally thin base:

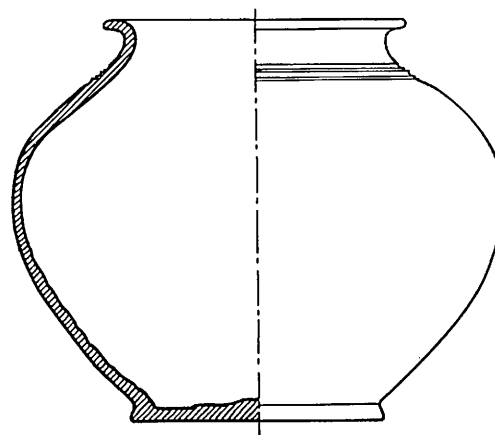


1:4

26 JAR

H 16.5, D 19.5 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 39.40.25

Reddish buff core, pale buff surface. Bright green glaze



1:3

overall, including the flat base. Flat, projecting rim. Two encircling grooves at collar. In shape very close to Chinese green-glazed earthenware of the Han and T'ang dynasties (O. D. Rucker-Embsen, *Chinesische Frühkeramik*, Leipzig, 1922, pl. 5).

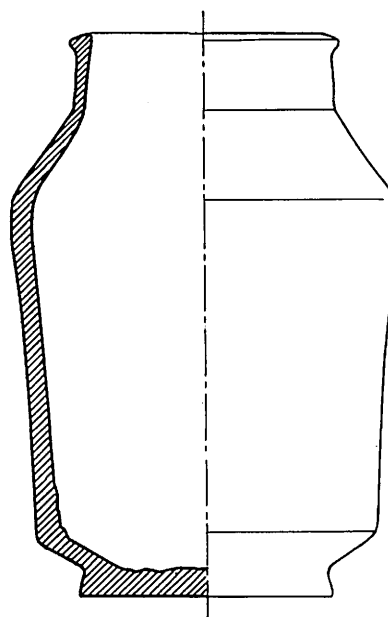
27 BOWL

D 20.3, H 6.25 cm ; Tepe Madrasah
MIB

Red clay, green glaze. A poorly made piece with sagging, everted rim. A groove near the edge of the base. Green-glazed bowls of this shape were not common. A smaller example was found that sagged even more and had a slightly concave base. Such poorly made pieces were doubtless local products because they were numerous and not worth importing.

28 JAR

H 22.4, D 15 cm ; Qanat Tepe
Discarded



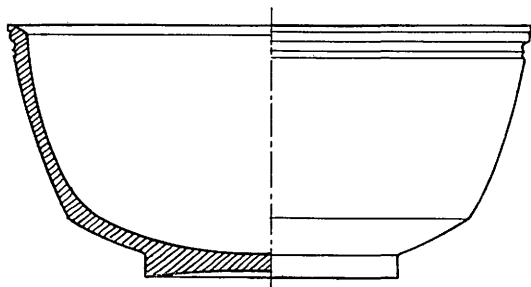
1:3

Red clay, white engobe, green glaze. Poorly made and badly spalled. Flat base. Lip projects and slopes downward. A groove encircling the body halfway up indicates that the piece may have been made in two halves.

29 BOWL

D 21.5, H 9.8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Red body, white engobe, clear bright green glaze. Rim slopes down within the bowl. Several circumscribing grooves on the exterior. Broken in antiquity and repaired by riveting. One of several examples from Nishapur showing that repairing was not confined to rare or finely made pieces. Several bowls that also taper down from a flat rim, apparently all of the ninth and tenth centuries, were found in various locations (the drawing reproduces an



1:3

example from Village Tepe). A very similar shape occurs in the color-splashed ware (Group 2, 52, 53).

30 BOWL

D 16.5, H 8.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

Red body, no engobe, warm green glaze. Base slightly concave. The rim is flat and slopes down and inward. One strongly marked circumscribing groove beneath the rim. On the base, remains of a stilt; stilt marks on the bottom also.

31 BOWL

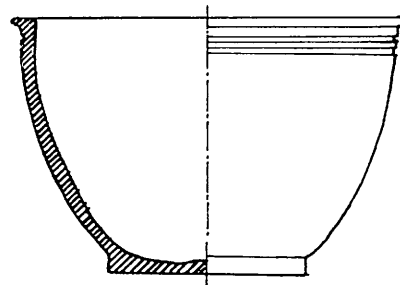
D 25.5, H 15 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.191

Red body, buffish surface, green glaze. Circumscribing grooves beneath the rim. The base has a deep groove, a centimeter in width, that almost forms a foot ring.

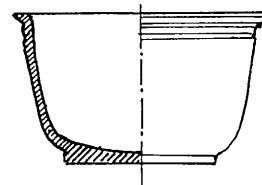
32 BOWL

D 15.15, H 10 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Red body, no engobe, green glaze. Flat base, projecting rim. A circumscribing groove beneath the rim. Lowest

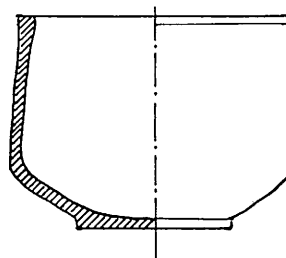


32 1:3



1:3

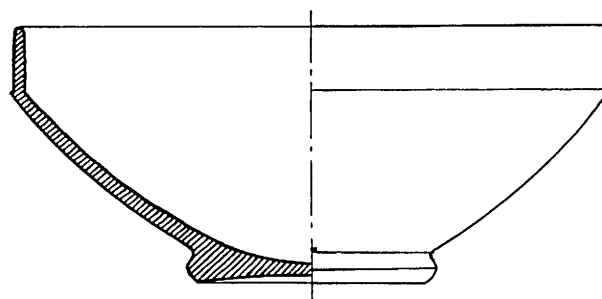
level location suggests ninth century. Another example, also from the Village Tepe and the same deep level, has a similar rim, but its base is closer in diameter to its top, resulting in a steeper wall. It is in the Teheran museum. Green-glazed bowls were also made with insloping walls as in the drawing:



1:3

33 BOWL

D 23, H 10 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 38.40.283



1:3

Red body, chocolate brown glaze, which, on vessels of the present shape, never seems to be of a purplish hue. The brown color was less popular than green, but it was not only used for bowls, as can be seen on 36 and 37 and on lamps like 20. At the base of the vertical rim is a projecting ridge. The base of the bowl is slightly concave. Bowls of this shape occur in three other wares of Nishapur: the graffiato color-splashed (Group 2, 31), the poly-

chrome on white (Group 4, 53, among others), and the alkaline-glazed (Group 11, 80). The shape seems to have been especially popular in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. Such pieces, with an alkaline blue glaze and a gritty white composite body (Group 11, 31), were not made before the end of the eleventh century at the earliest.

34 BOWL

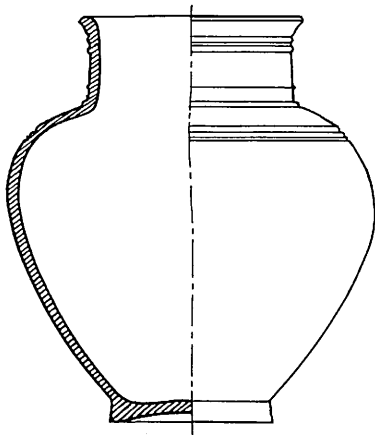
D 23, H 11.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Red body. The engobe, containing manganese, stained the lead glaze a dark, cold brown. Rim slightly everted. Circumscribing grooves on the exterior. A similar example in the Metropolitan (38.40.175) from Sabz Pushan has a brown glaze over all except the base, which is without engobe. Yet another, in the Teheran museum, is also from Sabz Pushan.

35 JAR

H 17, D 14.8 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 40.170.19

Reddish buff body, dark brown glaze covering both outside and inside. Base slightly concave. Projecting rim. Beneath it, two circumscribing grooves; two more on the shoulder. A somewhat similar jar from the same site is in the Metropolitan (39.40.26):

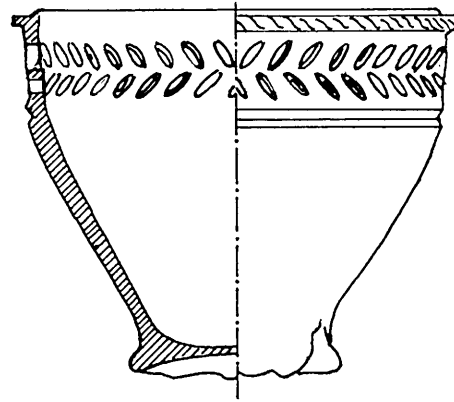


1:3

36 FLOWERPOT

H 13.5, D 17.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.19

Reddish body, buff surface, dark, clear chocolate brown glaze. In places it has run under the base, making the piece sit somewhat unstably. The vertical collar, rising from a groove and a projecting ridge, is pierced in oval



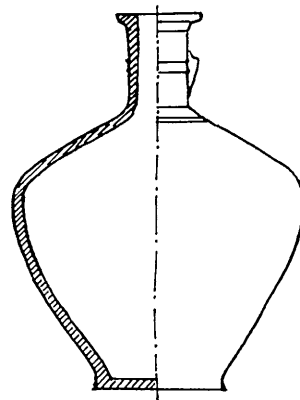
1:3

shapes arranged in a herringbone pattern. The edge of the flattened, projecting rim is marked with a series of sloping indentations. On the interior the glaze extends to just below the openwork.

37 PITCHER

H 15, D 12 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Red body, dark brown glaze. Tapered globular body; tall, thin neck with flange. The piece probably had a small domed lid in the fashion of those used on unglazed pitchers of similar shape (Group 12, 30). A variation of



1:3

the shape was found in Sabz Pushan, the piece having a flat projecting rim rather than a flange. A similar shape, but for the flange, occurs in the tenth- and eleventh-century earthenware of Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 275, fig. 30, top left). It continued after the eleventh century with the bodies of later pieces tending to become more globular (Bahrami, *Gorgan Faïences*, pl. XIII, center).

38 ASSEMBLY OF DISHES

D 19.5 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Probably for serving nuts and sweetmeats. Reddish clay, clear dark brown glaze. Five dishes joined in a ring by means of flat strips of clay, the outer tips of which are pointed. The rims of the dishes are flat and project

slightly. The making of such assemblies in Iran goes back to the ninth century B.C.; an example found at Hasanlu, in which the dishes number three, is in the Metropolitan (60.20.60). A Sasanian example found at Qasr-i-abu Nasr (unpublished) has three hemispherical dishes connected by straps similar to those of 38. The monochrome assemblies were not confined to Iran. An example originally composed of seven compartments covered with yellow glaze was found in Ramla (*Ramla Excavations*, see under glazed pottery, fig. 2). It dates to the eighth or early ninth century.

Assemblies occur in three other Nishapur wares: the buff (Group 1, 48), the color-splashed (Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, X, p. 8, fig. 6), and the blue-glazed ware with an earthenware body. An assembly in the latter ware with an opaque turquoise glaze and an inscription in black appeared on the market after 1940.

In the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries a different kind of sweetmeat dish was made elsewhere than Nishapur in luster ware (Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 644 C).

39 ASSEMBLY OF DISHES

D 28, H 4.2 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

Reddish clay, blue glaze. A central circular dish with eight smaller ones attached to its circumference. Flat attachments similar to those of 38, except that they are embellished by raised studs, join the small dishes. Within the central dish is a shallow cup, its rim less high than the rim of the dish. This probably functioned as a lamp or a candlestick. Lamps or candlesticks of generally similar shape occur in the unglazed ware of Nishapur (Group 12, 44, 45).

40 BOWL

D 20, H 6.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.185

Reddish clay, white engobe, graffiato decoration, green glaze. Base slightly concave. Exterior glazed but undecorated. Within the bowl, in a doubly outlined band, is a repetitive Kufic "inscription," gracefully drawn, with foliated verticals and tops. On the bottom is a doubly outlined circle filled with crosshatching. Fired upside down. Tenth century. Similar bowls were found on which the hatching on the bottom is wavy, as it sometimes is in the color-splashed graffiato ware (Group 2, 43). Although bowls with graffiato decoration and green glaze were common in Nishapur, those with pseudo inscriptions were rare.

41 BOWL

D 20.5, H 6.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.125

Red clay, white engobe, graffiato decoration, green glaze. Base slightly concave. Exterior glazed but undecorated. Within the bowl, two rows of loosely drawn spiral forms separated by a double line. On the bottom, a circle filled with crosshatching. Fired upside down, the glaze gathering at the rim on one side in a projecting drop. Tenth century. Somewhat similar vessels were found in Tiz on the Persian Gulf (Stein, *Archaeological Reconnaissances*, pl. iv, nos. A1, A2).

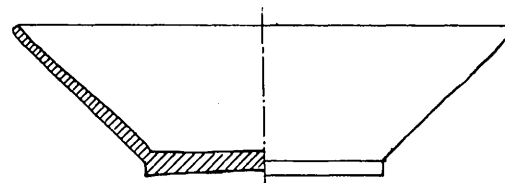
42 BOWL

D 22.5, H 7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.20

Red body, white engobe, graffiato decoration, green glaze. Base slightly concave. Exterior glazed but undecorated. Decoration on the wall in two registers, the upper containing a running border of half-leaves with small trifoliate forms filling the triangular spaces, the lower containing circles filled with flowerlike designs based on S-curves. Bottom covered with wide crosshatching. Three bare spots here, the result of breaking free a stilt. Fired upside down, drops of glaze gathering on the rim. Tenth century.

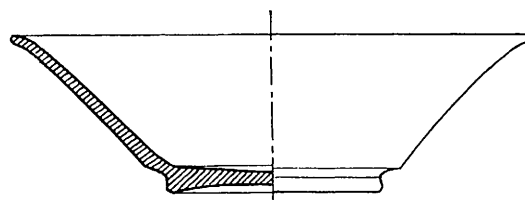
43 BOWL

D 19.5, H 6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB



1:3

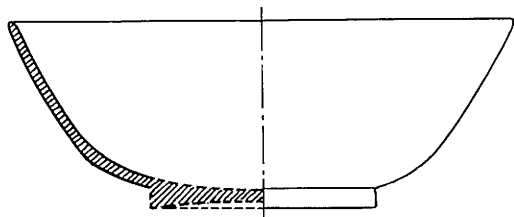
Red clay, white engobe, strong green glaze. Graffiato decoration on the wall of loosely drawn spirals, the pattern divided into quadrants by variations in the placing of the spirals. The bottom covered with long spirals. Stilt marks present. Fired upside down, drops of glaze gathering on the rim. Tenth century. Some graffiato green bowls have, in addition to the concave base, a double change of angle above it and in the one illustrated, a more outcurving rim. Another example from Tepe Madraseh is in the Metropolitan (40.170.8):



1:3

44 BOWL FRAGMENT

D 19.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.184



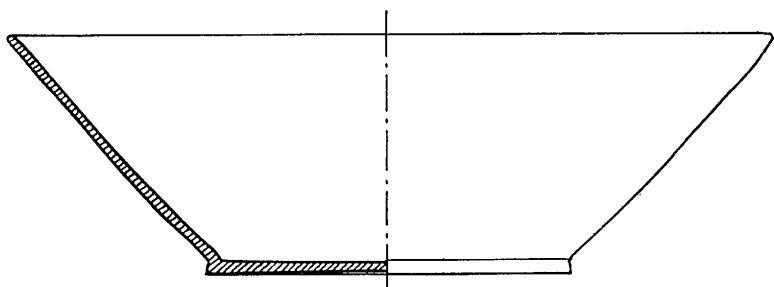
1:3

Red body, white engobe, graffiato decoration, clear green glaze. The almost hemispherical shape seen here is commoner in the green-glazed graffiato ware than in any other Nishapur ware. The design consists of freely drawn half-palmettes back to back within circles. This decoration is reminiscent of the more loosely filled graffiato circles found at Samarra (*Excavations at Samarra, 1936-1939*, II, pl. LXXXI).

45 BOWL FRAGMENT

D 24.3 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Red body, white engobe, graffiato decoration, clear green glaze. The decoration, a variant of that on 41, consists of two rows of circular plantlike figures. The bottom, cross-hatched, shows stilt marks. An incomplete bowl with flaring sides, somewhat better potted than 45, also from



1:3

Sabz Pushan, had two rows of more carefully drawn circular motifs containing leaflike forms, the rows separated by a band containing a wavelike motif.

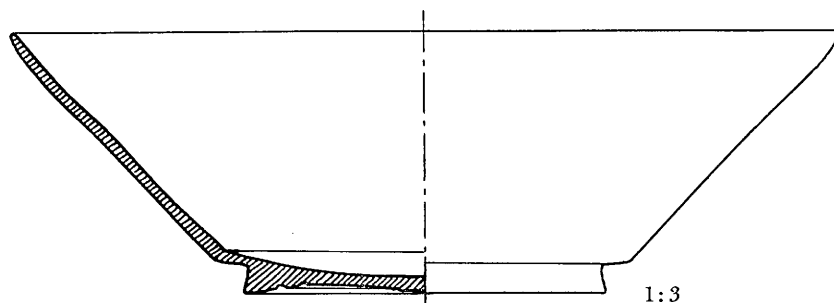
46 BOWL FRAGMENT

D 24.3 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Red body, white engobe, graffiato decoration, green glaze—uneven and blotchy. Four large circles each contain a circular area filled with crosshatching. Between the circles are double-outlined biconvex forms devoid of interior decoration. The spaces between the figures are filled with a scalelike scribble reminiscent of several color-splashed graffiato bowls found in Nishapur. Possibly an import from Afrasiyab.

47 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 22.5 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.186

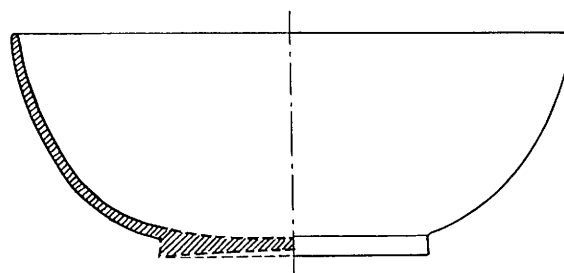


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Reddish body, white engobe, graffiato decoration, green glaze. In shape somewhat different from the preceding bowls, in that there is a sudden change of direction in the silhouette just where the bottom joins the inner wall. The base has a bevel supplemented by two grooves and curves downward. The compartments on the inner wall, alternately triangular and four-sided, are filled with motifs suggesting leafy forms. The resemblance of this decoration to certain of the color-splashed graffiato bowls is rather close (Group 2, 23).

48 BOWL (incomplete)

D 22.5, H 7.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.96



1:3

Red body, white engobe, bright, clear green glaze. A larger example of the popular hemispherical shape seen in 44. The graffiato design on the inner wall is divided into three bands bounded by double lines. The upper band contains V-shapes, alternately upright and inverted, drawn in such a way that they suggest plants. The center band contains a series of circles filled with curling forms. Beneath this is a roughly drawn cable design. The bottom was probably crosshatched.

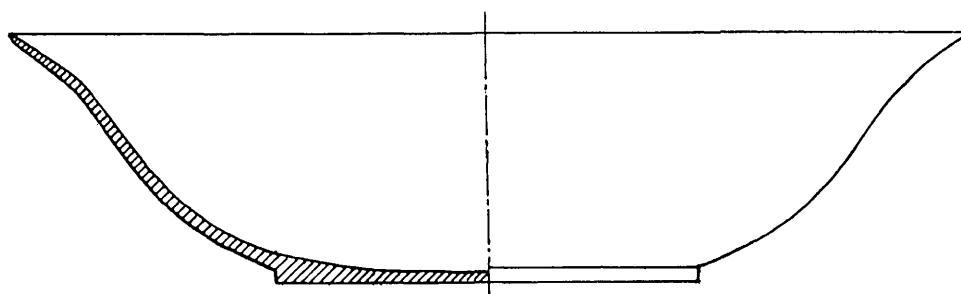
49 BOWL

D 22, H 8.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

Red body, white engobe. Perhaps a waster; certainly a spoiled piece, since the green glaze, badly mottled, has turned a muddy brown. In shape similar to 44 and 48. Fired upside down, the rim nearly black with accumulated glaze; at one point a drop projects. On the wall, three bands bounded by double lines, the top and bottom ones filled with scribbled curls, the center one left empty. On the bottom, a scribbled circle.

50 a,b BOWL

D 38.4, H 9.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.16

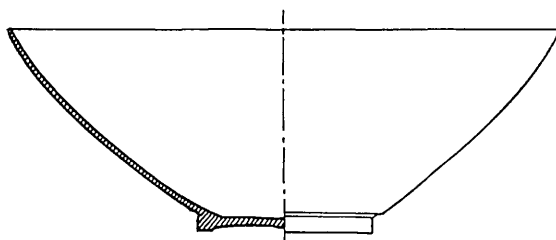


1:3

Yellowish body, graffiato decoration, toffee-colored glaze. Although the walls are turned thin, the base, which has no foot ring, is so poorly made that the vessel rocks when placed on a flat surface. The lip is everted. Stilt marks and a pool of glaze on the bottom. The exterior (50b) is glazed but undecorated. On the interior wall are two birds, their lack of feet and the simplified treatment of their feathers and tails giving them a fishlike appearance. At their necks are streamers, a survival of a Sasanian fashion. From a ninth-century location. Since no other examples of graffiato ware with this kind of body and glaze were found, 50 must be considered an import, perhaps, in view of the body, from Iraq. Birds without feet occur in the imitation luster ware of Nishapur (Group 6, 44) and are also to be seen on glazed earthenware from elsewhere in Iran (Pézard, *Céramique*, pl. LXXXI, upper).

51 a,b BOWL

D 20.2, H 8 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.213



Reddish core, buff surface, white engobe, nearly colorless glaze, with graffiato decoration incised through the engobe showing as brown. Clay has a very smooth feel, not typical of Nishapur. Thinly turned, the wall somewhat convex, the rim left a little thicker than the wall. The engobe does not completely cover the inner surface; as a result there are brown patches under the glaze on the bottom. Stilt marks also present. The exterior (51b) is covered with engobe and glaze but is undecorated. The base, concave, has neither engobe nor glaze. Decoration: a deep band bounded top and bottom by a pair of incised lines, a feature also of 59, 60, 63; within the band four shapes resembling oak leaves, filling pear-shaped compartments, alternate with four petal-shaped forms, each containing an illegible word in Kufic. This is probably a corrupt version of *Allah*, as is suggested by comparable pieces

with a more elaborate decoration between the vertical letters (Flury, *Syria*, II, pls. xxxii, xxxiv). The outlines of the eight forms on 51 are double; the triangular spaces between them are filled with spirals. Found in a location that produced a quantity of alkaline-glazed ware, suggesting a date not earlier than the eleventh century. The spiral pattern of 51 is to be seen in a modified form in the Nishapur ware decorated with yellow-staining black (Group 8, 10). It also occurs in Egyptian luster ware (Bahgat & Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, pls. xxiv, nos. 1, 3, xxvi, no. 27, xxvii).

52 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

W 9.2 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Reddish body, white engobe, nearly colorless glaze, graffiato decoration incised through engobe showing as brown. Central motif, a nine-petaled rosette. On the wall, above a double ring, an inscription in a cursive hand, its base toward the rim. From a site in use in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

53 DISH FRAGMENT

W 6.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.536

1:3

Mold-made. Pinkish body, smooth to the touch. White

engobe. The glaze, which has a high lead content, has almost entirely disintegrated. There are splashes of green in it and what appears to be a spot of gold luster. The decoration, in relief, consists of beaded bands with leafy additions, very much like some of the gold-lustered ware with green splashes found at Samarra (*Excavations at Samarra, 1936-1939*, II, pls. LXXXIX, no. 8, xc, top; Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pls. x, xi). Probably imported from Iraq.

54 DISH FRAGMENT

W 4.15 cm ; Qanat Tepe

MIB

Mold-made. Pinkish body, smooth to the touch. White engobe. No trace of luster remains. The decoration is somewhat related to 53, but the bands are decorated with double concentric circles and the leaflike forms are more complex. From a deep, ninth-century level. Imported from Iraq.

55 DISH FRAGMENT

W 6.2 cm ; Qanat Tepe

MMA 40.170.517

Gritty reddish body, no engobe, green glaze. Vertical wall, flat, projecting rim. Beneath a circumscribing band in relief, a series of vertical gouges forms a row of "columns." Probably an import.

56 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 4.9 cm ; Tepe Madrasah

MIB

Mold-made. Green glaze. Decoration: two rows of concentric circles with a row of small stars between them. An unusual piece, probably imported.

57 DISH

W 11.5 cm ; Village Tepe

MIB

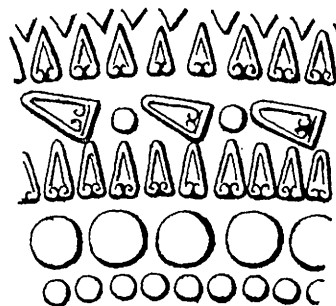
Reddish body, white engobe, graffiato decoration, nearly colorless glaze. The shape, with very small base and widely flaring, slightly convex walls, was unusual in the ninth- and tenth-century wares of Nishapur, but it had become popular in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The decoration, appearing yellowish brown under the glaze, consists of the expression *al yumn* (happiness), repeated thrice. A vertical stroke is added at each end of the word, probably for decorative purposes. The verticals have been given a foliated appearance by the addition of curved strokes. Placed between the inscriptions is a small circular scribble. Eleventh or twelfth century.

58 DISH FRAGMENT

W 8 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan

MMA 40.170.459

Mold-made. Pinkish body, no engobe, clear green glaze inside and over most of the exterior. The piece looks unfinished beneath; there is no indication of a base and the decoration simply fades away. In addition to a lack of glaze on parts of the exterior, the piece is otherwise faulty, for the decoration, consisting of small elongated "open hearts," circles, and disks, slides down on one



side. If not a true waster, a spoiled piece. This was the only fragment found with this type of design and of this hemispherical shape. Several examples in Group 12 (147, 153) show related designs.

59 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 8.8 cm ; Qanat Tepe

MMA 40.170.430

Reddish buff clay, white engobe, deeply incised graffiato decoration, brownish beneath nearly colorless glaze. Near the rim, triple incised lines. A pseudo inscription with leafy forms developing from a curved stem in the spaces between the "letters." The exterior, undecorated, is covered with engobe and glaze only about two-thirds of the way down from the rim. Eleventh century.

60 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 12.4 cm ; Village Tepe

MMA 40.170.521

A portion of this fragment is in the Teheran museum. Reddish body, white engobe, deeply incised graffiato decoration, clear purple glaze. Exterior glazed but undecorated. Turned thin, with the rim slightly thickened (compare 51). The decoration, neatly drawn between circumscribing lines (see 51, 59, 63), features an undulating stem from which half-leaves grow, their triangular centers crosshatched. Above and below this, a cable design. Not earlier than eleventh century. Purple-glazed pieces were rare in Nishapur.

61 FRAGMENT (pitcher?)

W 4 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.535b

Mold-made. Very hard, gritty body, no engobe, dull greenish gray glaze. The inside surface unglazed. Decoration: rows of square lozenges. Each lozenge contains a smaller one with a tiny ring at the center. An unusual piece, probably imported.

62 JAR OR PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 6.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.537

Mold-made. Reddish body, no engobe, bright green glaze on exterior surface only. Decoration: hatched bands with raised outlines. A unique piece in Nishapur. The type of decoration was used in Samarra on flat lustered dishes (*Excavations at Samarra, 1936-1939*, II, pl. LXXXIX, nos. 2, 5, 8; Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. c, nos. 2, 5).

63 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 17 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 40.170.537

Buff body, white engobe, deeply incised graffiato decoration, greenish glaze. Exterior glazed but undecorated. In shape probably originally like 51, which also is slightly thickened near the rim and has two strongly marked grooves near it. The well-formed Kufic letters with triangular tops are not as curved as on 59, but the intervening spaces are similarly filled with foliations. These foliate designs can also be seen in the ware with yellow-staining black (Group 8, 24) and the alkaline-glazed ware (Group 11, 50).

64 PITCHER (?) FRAGMENT

W 16.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Made in the upper portion of a two-piece mold. Greenish gray body, no engobe, dull green glaze, like 61. Decoration of interwoven bands with raised outlines. In some of the spaces between the bands, groups of three contiguous circles. An unusual piece, probably imported. Somewhat similar ware was found in Paikand (Kondratieva, *Trudy*, V, p. 223, pl. vi).

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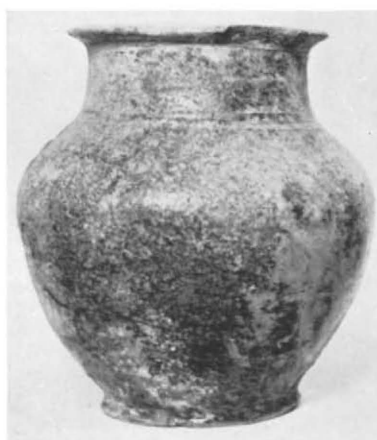
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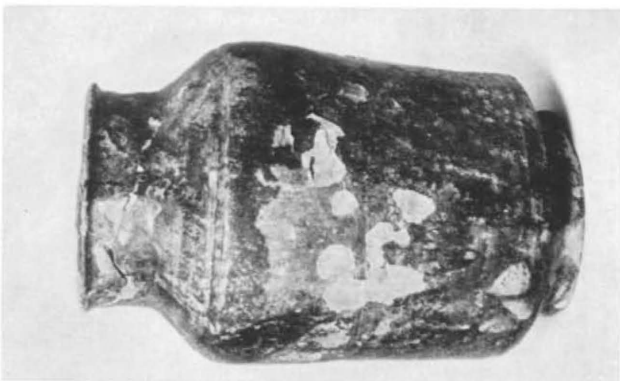
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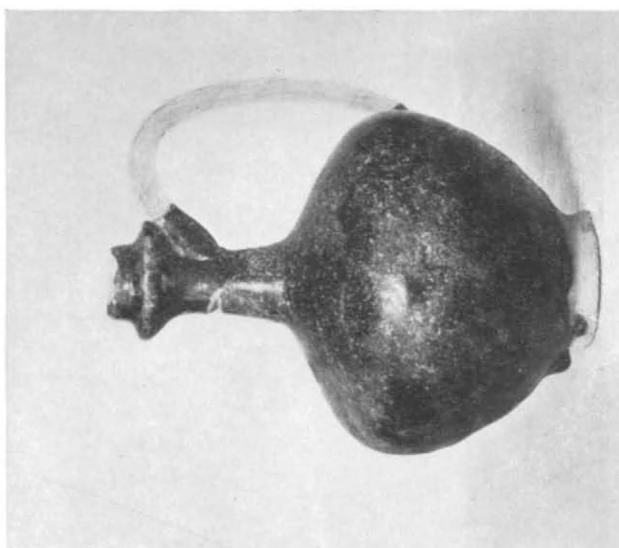


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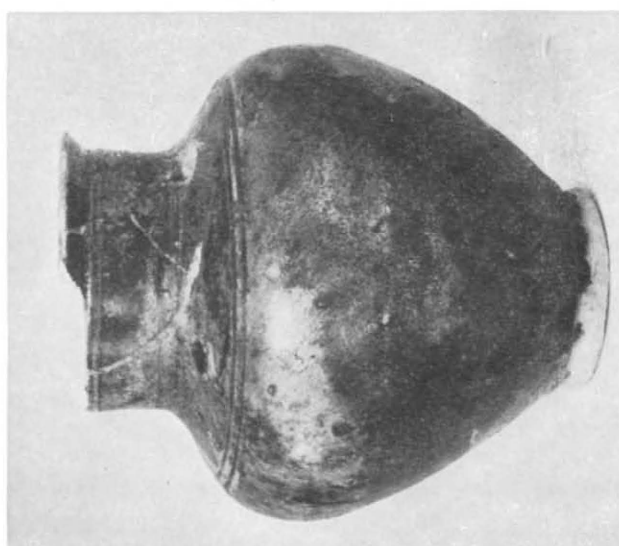
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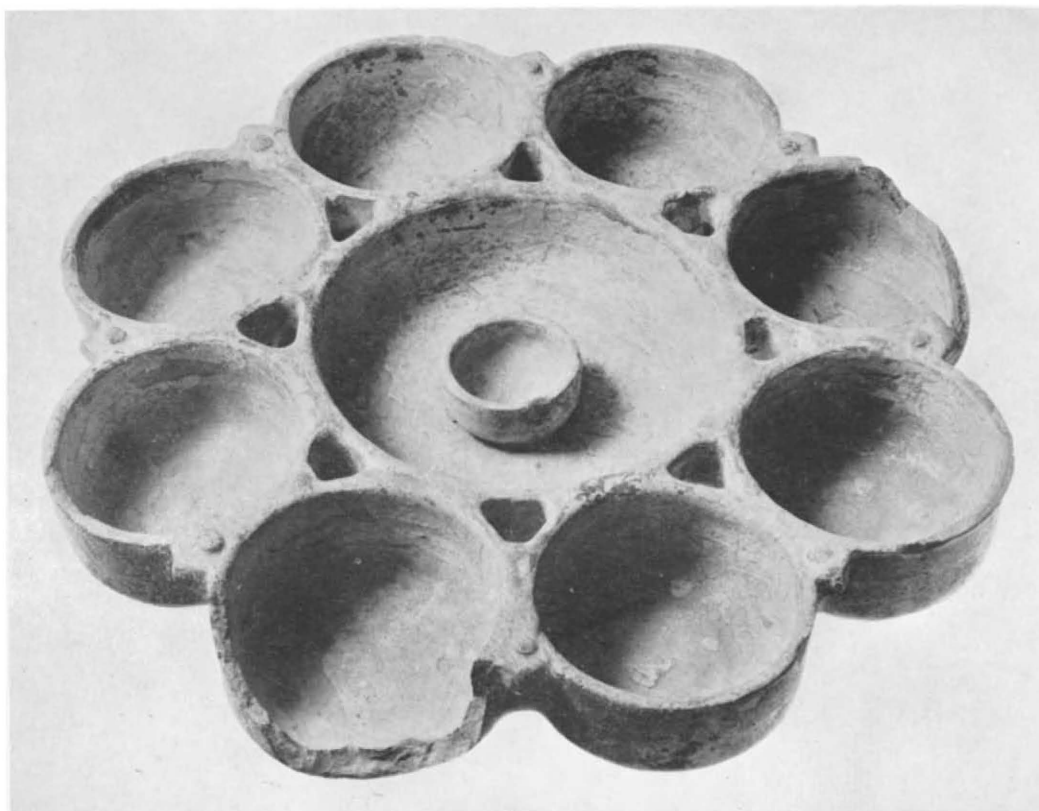


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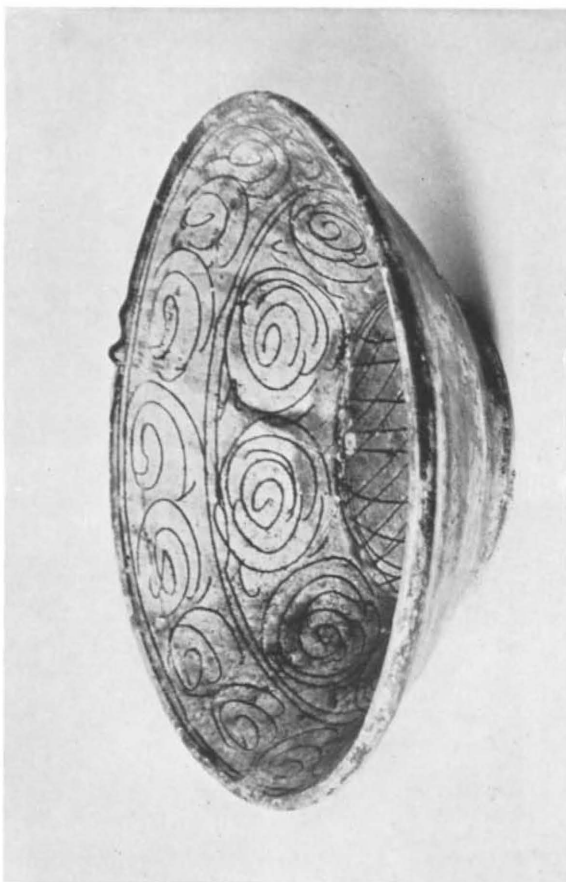
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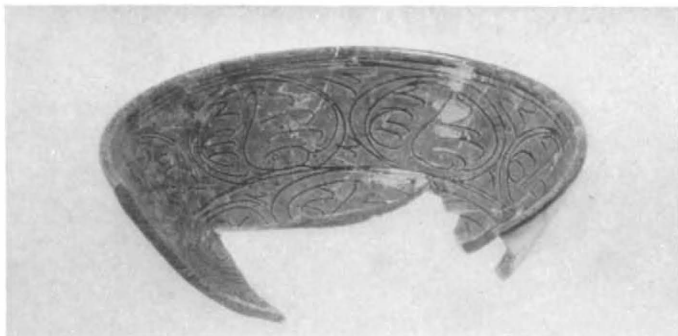
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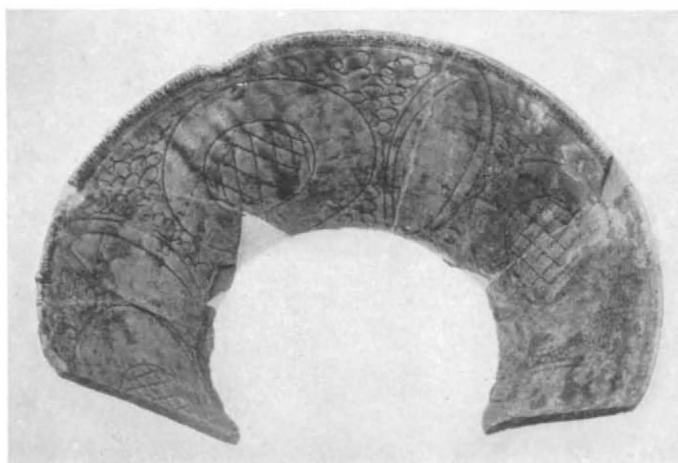
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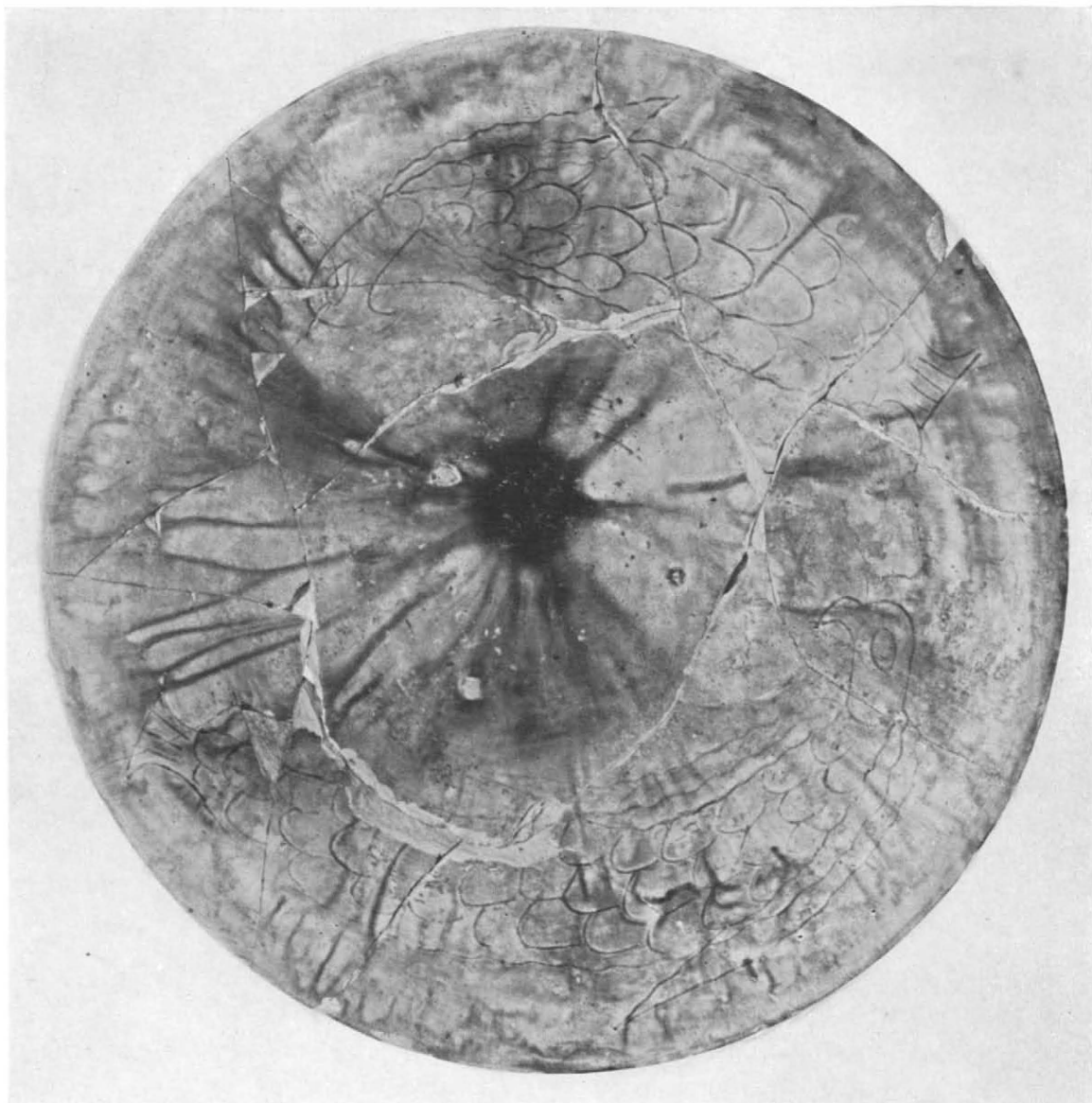


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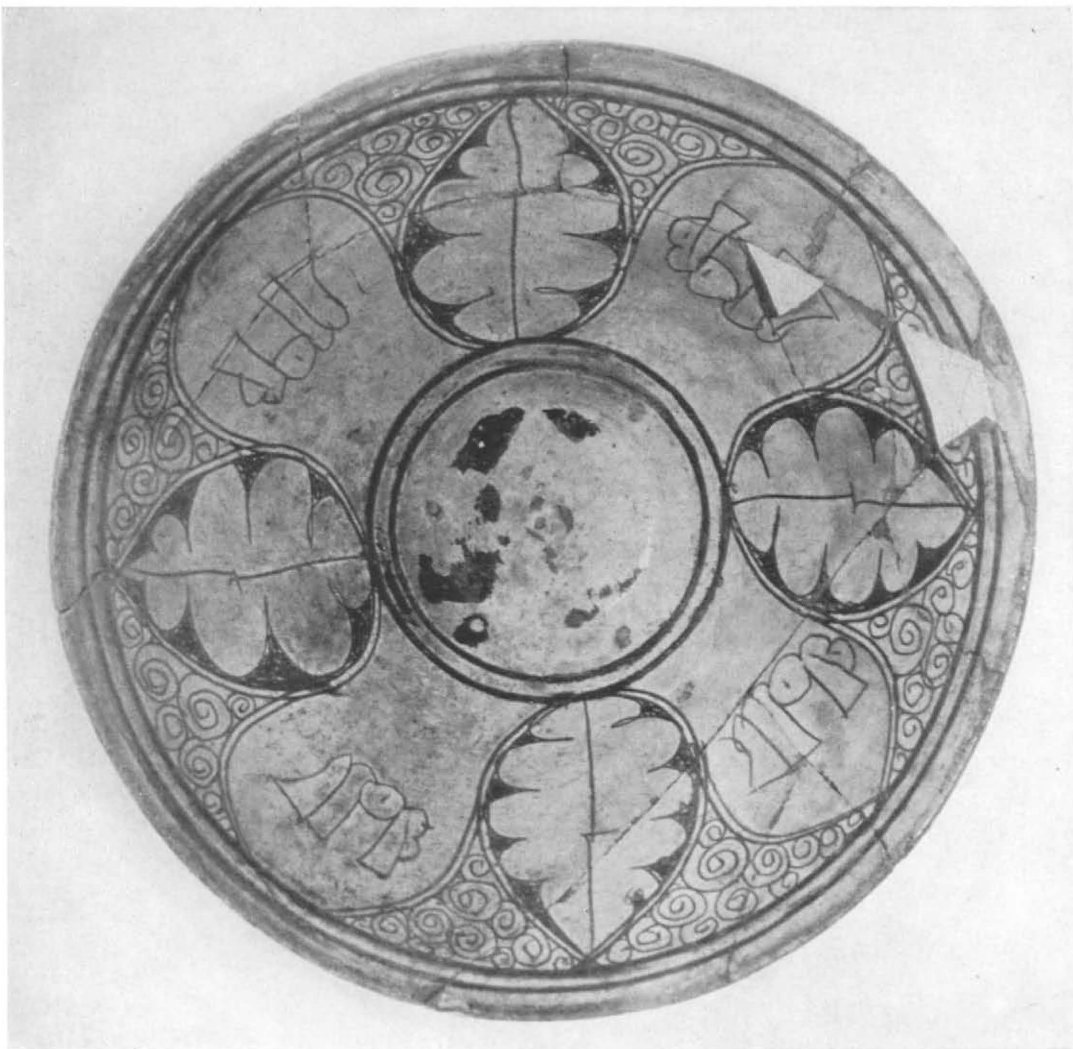


50a



50b

51a



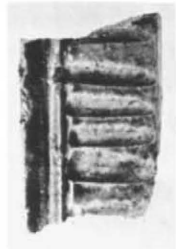
51b



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53



52



57, 58



61, 62



59, 60



64



63



10

Chinese Wares

Most of the pottery excavated at Nishapur was made there. Of the rest, the greater part was imported from other regions of the Islamic world, mainly from Iraq to the west and Transoxiana to the east. In addition to these importations, the remains of a few pieces of Chinese earthenware and porcelaneous ware came to light in Nishapur. This is not surprising, for Chinese imports have been found in a good many Islamic sites in Iran, Iraq, Arabia, and Egypt.

Early literary references indicate that the Chinese wares were regarded highly in Islam. In the context of ceramics the word *chini*, meaning Chinese, is in Arabic and Persian almost a synonym for excellence. The presentation of two thousand and twenty pieces of *chini* wares to Caliph Harun-al-Rashid (786–809) is mentioned in connection with the color-splashed ware of Nishapur (page 54). This testimony from Baihaqi is particularly interesting in connection with Nishapur in that the donor of the gift, Ali ibn Isa, was governor of Khurasan and was buried at Mashhad, not far from Nishapur. Ali ibn Isa was famous for the extent of his exactions and for his remaining in office by sharing them with the caliph, but of even more significance for us is Baihaqi's indication of how much Chinese material was available in the eighth or early ninth century. A writer who touches on another aspect of the subject is the merchant Suleiman who, in his account (dated 851) of his travels from the Persian Gulf to China, shows that he was acquainted not only with Chinese earthenware but Chinese porcelain. "The Chinese have a fine clay," he says, "from which they make drinking cups fine as glasses, through which you can see the gleam of the water though they are made of clay" (Kahle, *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society*, 18, p. 32). This quality of translucence would have been extraordinary to a Muslim, for no potter in the Islamic world had the means of making such a ware, which depends on the mixing of china clay (kaolin) and china stone (feldspar), and high firing to make a white vitrified substance. Tha'alibi, in the first half of the eleventh century, is another writer who describes Chinese porcelain, noting that some of the vessels are *al-gada'ir al mustashaffa* (translucent). The finest ones ring and are

mishmishi (apricot color), he says, after which comes *zabadi* (a cream-colored ware) (ibid., pp. 34, 35). Al-Biruni, writing at the end of the eleventh century, mentions *luma* (a parti-colored ware) and remarks on its great price (ibid., p. 35). Relating how at Rayy he had a merchant friend from Isfahan who owned vessels and other objects of Chinese porcelain, al-Biruni adds that he was astonished at his desire for such luxury.

The traffic in Chinese ceramics to the Islamic world was probably mostly by sea. An indication of this is the mention by the ninth-century geographer Ibn Khurradadhbih in his *Al-masalik wal-mamalik* (*Routes and Kingdoms*) of porcelain as one of the goods shipped from Lukin on the Gulf of Tonkin—probably today's Lung-pien. Fragments of Chinese wares have been found at more than one old Islamic port. The most important of these appears to have been Siraf on the Persian Gulf, where, according to Suleiman, Chinese vessels discharged their cargoes. Siraf was described by Istakhri in the tenth century as the chief port of Iran, its merchants the richest in the land. Until it was destroyed by an earthquake in 977, Siraf had a commerce in Arab vessels with Basra in Iraq, and with Egypt, one route probably via Safaga, whence a road passing through the Wadi Hammamat to the Nile Valley had been in use from Pharaonic and Roman times. Abu Zaid Hasan, writing about 916, mentions that the boats going to Egypt from Siraf had to be of shallow draft. It was undoubtedly from Siraf that the Chinese ceramics found at Qasr-i-abu Nasr in Iran were imported.

Other ports of importance on the Persian Gulf were (old) Hormuz, the port for Kerman and Sistan, situated near present-day Bander Abbas, and Tiz, opposite Muscat, which has a route north to Nishapur and Mashhad. At Shahr-i-Daqianus and Jiruft, both of which lie between Tiz and Nishapur, glazed pottery of the type made in Khurasan and Transoxiana has been found, suggesting a traffic from north to south and reason for assuming that a similar traffic went northward. Istakhri relates that Jiruft, flourishing early in the ninth century, was a chief mart for the trade of Khurasan and Sistan (Stein, *Archaeological Reconnaissances*, p. 156). That Chinese ceramics

reached Nishapur by more than one route is likely. John A. Pope in *Chinese Porcelains from the Ardebil Shrine*, Washington, D.C., 1956, pp. 19–23, supplies interesting information on the transshipment of porcelain to the Islamic world, although dealing with a later period. As other parts of this study have made plain, pottery made in Transoxiana was imported to Nishapur, and it may well be that Chinese wares, reaching Transoxiana over the so-called Silk Road, continued on to Nishapur and from there on to Sabzewar (Baihaq), Damghan, and Rayy. It was in Rayy that the friend of al-Biruni lived who possessed so much Chinese porcelain. That this overland commerce ordinarily continued westward all the way to Iraq is doubtful in view of the easier sea route from Siraf to Basra. For Nishapur a further possibility is that sea-imported Chinese ceramics may have moved eastward from Iraq on the Silk Road. There is every reason to believe that the importation of Chinese ceramics was much greater in Iraq, the center of the Islamic world from the mid-eighth century onward, than it was in Khurasan. Although local dynasties such as the Tahirid, Saffarid, and later the Samanid, enjoyed a certain amount of autonomy in Khurasan, Iraq continued to be the center of Islamic power. Two wares of Iraq found in Nishapur, luster ware

and finely made opaque white ware decorated in green and blue, establish that there was traffic in luxury goods from west to east during the ninth and tenth centuries. The prized Chinese wares may well have moved eastward in this commerce.

The earliest of the Chinese pieces found in Nishapur can be dated to the ninth century. Although no complete vessel was found, their remains permit us to see that some of the pieces were of no mean merit. Among the types discovered were an ivory or cream white porcelaneous ware; a highly fired bluish white ware (*ch'ing pai*); T'ang mottled ware, green on white, or splashed with bluish green, purple, and yellow; and celadon. Of these types the one chiefly imitated in Nishapur was the color-splashed. The ivory and cream white porcelaneous ware, widely and accurately copied in Iraq in glazed earthenware, seems not to have been copied in Nishapur, although some of the copies were imported there from Iraq. The nearest that the Nishapur potters came to imitating this ware was in making inaccurate copies of the Iraqi adaptations. The fact that fewer types of Chinese ceramics were imitated in Nishapur, and in a less proficient way, supports the hypothesis that the influence of the Chinese products was first of all effective in Iraq.

1 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 7 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Body semivitreous, the felspathic glaze a warm white, the results of firing in an oxidizing atmosphere. Lip slightly everted. Sole decoration: raised rays, fashioned by the addition of a little slip. This type of Chinese ware was also imported into Samarra and copied there (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. XIX, no. 2).

2 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 4.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.614

Part of a thinly turned bowl with raised rays and an indentation at the tip of each ray. Rim not everted. The white body, highly fired, is porcelaneous. Though not translucent, it can, by some definitions, be considered porcelain. The color, under the felspathic glaze, is a cool off-white. Thickness of wall, no more than two millimeters. Originally a piece of exceptional fineness.

3 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Porcelaneous ware, off-white. A single ray present, only barely indicated. Rim slightly everted.

4 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 6.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.456h

Part of a thin, well-made T'ang dynasty bowl of the ninth century. The wall is but four millimeters thick, the thin, splayed foot ring seven millimeters high. The kaolin body, though fired harder than usual in T'ang pottery, is not vitreous. The lead glaze, highly glossy and minutely crazed, iridescent in patches, covers the interior, exterior, and base. The white surface is heavily splashed with green and has itself been faintly tinged with this green. The clearly defined rays on the inner wall were produced by furrows on the exterior, not (as in 1, 2, 3, 6) by the addition of slip on the interior. This technique, common in the T'ang

period, is to be seen in celadon fragments found in Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. xxv, no. 4). The same technique occurs in pottery from the Yüeh site on the Shang Lin Hu (Plumer, *Ars Islamica*, IV, pp. 195-200).

5 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 6.4 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MIB

A bluish felspathic glaze covers a graffiato pattern, the nature of which, because of the smallness of the fragment, cannot be ascertained. Probably *ch'ing pai* ware. For other pieces of this ware, see 14, 15.

6 BOWL FRAGMENT

W at rim 4 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MMA 40.170.613

The raised ray is not sharply defined, but the indentation in the rim is reminiscent of 2. The body is hard to the point of being porcelainous. The felspathic glaze, a creamy white, has eroded on the ray. The thickened glaze at the rim is crazed. The thickness of the wall is four to five millimeters, the customary measure. Most Islamic copies of this kind of ware are also of this thickness.

7 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 5.4 cm ; Sabz Pushan

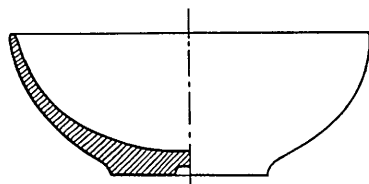
MIB

Porcelainous ware, off-white. Everted rim. It is likely that the rim had no raised rays and that it was undecorated.

8 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 5.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MMA 40.170.456f



1:3

One quarter of a Yüeh-type celadon bowl, olive in color, of the ninth century. Perhaps from Shang Lin Hu. The base is formed of a low foot ring two centimeters wide, enclosing a small depression. The foot ring is glazed with brownish red marks, and the base is tinged with red near the outer circumference. Similarly colored marks appear on the foot rings of celadon pieces from Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. xxiii, nos. 13, 15; Bahgat &

Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, p. 70, pl. LIV, no. 2). In shape, the base of 8 resembles that of the first of these Samarra pieces. A piece of Yüeh ware with a base similar to 8, found at Ctesiphon, is in the Metropolitan (32.150.364). A piece of white porcelainous ware with a similar base was found in Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. xxiv, no. 2).

9 DISH FRAGMENT

W 6.5 cm ; Vineyard Tepe

MMA 40.170.456g

An example of tenth-century three-color ware. The kaolin is almost vitrified. The glaze has no crazing, is iridescent in places, and has some deterioration and opacity. This small dish is thickly potted, with the wall sloping gradually up from the central well. The well, only a few millimeters deep, is smaller in diameter than the cleanly turned foot ring. Glaze splashed with spots of bluish green, purple, and brownish yellow. No glaze on the bottom of the foot ring. Fired upright. An unusual piece on several counts: three colors are present, manganese was employed for the purple, and the green is sharp, almost turquoise. That the piece is an unusual Chinese one and not an unusual Islamic one is clear from the kaolin body and the fact that it was fired at a higher temperature than any known piece of Abbasid pottery. Although the peculiarity of the color is not truly indicative, the firing technique is decisive.

10 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 8 cm ; Village Tepe

MMA 40.170.456a

Porcelainous ware, the fragment revealing no decoration. The grayish white body is covered with a felspathic glaze, the surface color appearing a neutral off-white. Minute crazing. Foot ring six millimeters high, vertical on the outside, sloping on the inside. A Chinese piece with a similar foot ring, the color slightly warmer, found in Ctesiphon, is in the Metropolitan (32.150.241).

11 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 6.9 cm ; Vineyard Tepe

MMA 40.170.456b

Exterior (illustrated) shows a dark greenish mottling, suggesting that the ware was made to resemble moss agate. The interior is a cold white. Fired to an extremely high temperature, to the degree of becoming porcelain. The felspathic glaze has a high gloss. Slightly everted rim. The site does not seem to date later than the end of the tenth century, but the uniqueness of the piece suggests a possible accidental inclusion in the finds, since this kind of ware is not known until much later.

12 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 5.42 cm ; East Kilns
MIB

White porcelainous ware with incised patterns, small curved nicks forming a background to a petallike design of bolder and broader cutting.

13 DISH FRAGMENT (bottom)

D 6.7 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.274

Color-splashed ware of the T'ang dynasty. White body. Well potted. The medallion, about two millimeters thick, was molded separately and affixed on the bottom of the dish by moistening the kaolin with a little water. The lead glaze, crazed, is stained a warmish green with a few indications of yellow. It covers most of the decoration, wavering indefinitely at the base, as is typical of T'ang pieces, leaving a few areas uncovered. Also typically T'ang is the thin, splayed foot ring, finished with a chamfer. The design in the medallion consists of a coiled three-clawed dragon and a jewel. Another example of a dragon on an applied medallion is to be seen in R. L. Hobson, *The George Eumorfopoulos Collection Catalogue of the Chinese, Korean and Persian Pottery and Porcelain*, London, 1925, I, pl. LXVIII, no. 492. Another bowl with an applied medallion on the bottom is in the Islamische Abteilung, Berlin (Erdmann, *Berliner Museen*, X, p. 13, fig. 18).

14 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 5.6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.456c

Part of a *ch'ing pai* bowl of the tenth century. Fired to a very high temperature in a reducing atmosphere; the felspathic glaze, because of the presence of iron, has turned slightly blue. The body has a sugary appearance. The graffiato decoration on the exterior (not illustrated) consists of a series of petallike shapes and, about three centimeters below the rim, a horizontal line. The narrow band of the rim is entirely without glaze. Below this on the interior is a band of chattered lines covered with only a trace of glaze, as if glaze had been applied and then wiped off. In China, bowls of this type were often fitted with copper or silver rims; there is no indication of such treatment here. *Ch'ing pai* bowls were often fired in pairs, one inverted over the other, a collar being used to reduce the risk of their losing shape in the intense heat.

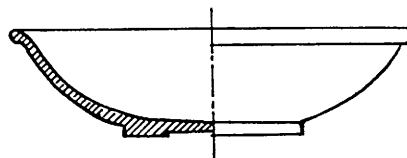
15 BOWL FRAGMENT (bottom)

H 15.14 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.456d

Even though they do not fit together, 14 and 15 are apparently pieces of the same bowl. They have the same color and the same graffiato decoration on the exterior.

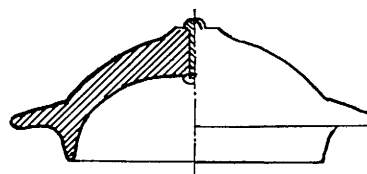
16 BOWL FRAGMENT

Original D of base 7, H 4.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.456e



1:3

Grayish white porcelainous ware with a felspathic glaze that does not extend over the base. The lip has been thickened on the exterior. From its location, datable to the ninth century. Resembles Chinese pieces found at Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. xxiv, no. 2). For a bowl of this ware, see Lindberg, *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, 25, pl. 2a. A similar base is illustrated in the same issue, pl. 1b. Of this same ware a fragment of a lid found in the Qanat Tepe had a bronze pin passing through its peak:

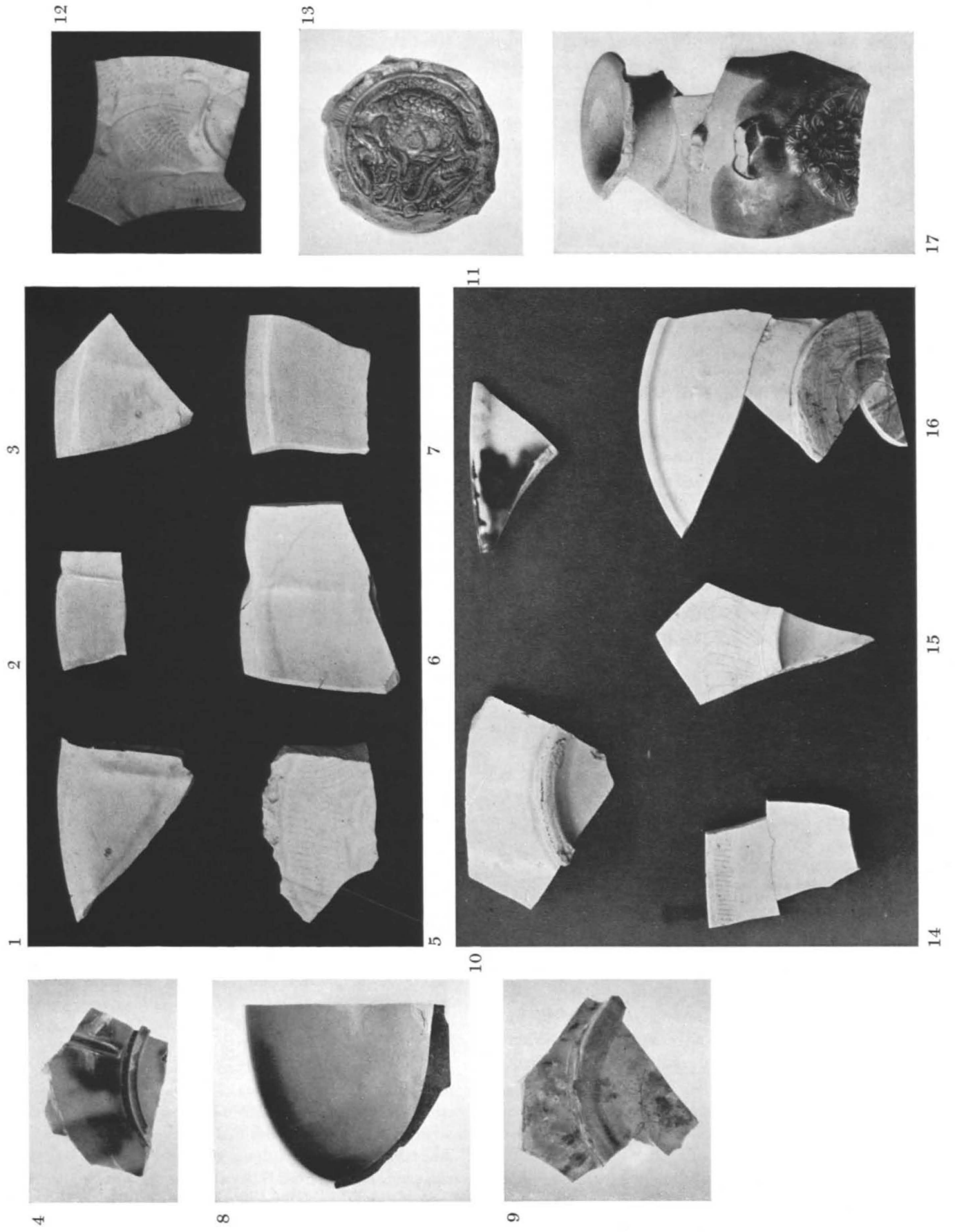


1:3

17 EWER (?)

D of rim 6.2 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 40.170.455

This T'ang dynasty, ninth-century piece probably once had two small loop handles and one larger one on the side opposite a spout. The clay (not kaolin) body has burned to a light buff. The lead glaze, finely crackled, is an indefinite yellowish color in the light areas, a clear deep brown in the dark areas. A molded decoration added on the side shows two confronted birds separated by feathery foliage. A similar decorative motif occurs on a complete ewer with a spout in the Eumorfopoulos Collection (Hobson, *The George Eumorfopoulos Collection Catalogue of the Chinese, Korean and Persian Pottery and Porcelain*, London, 1925, I, pl. LVIII, no. 369); in fact these appliqués seem to be from the very same mold. Still another piece with the identical design at the roots of the handles and below the spout is in the Cleveland Museum of Art (*Golden Anniversary Acquisitions Exhibition Catalogue*, p. 265, no. 141). The Cleveland ewer has been identified as stoneware, Wachaping, Ch'ang-Sha, Honan Province, T'ang, 618-907. For the identification of 17 and other pieces like it as T'ung-kuan ware, see *The Charles B. Hoyt Collection in the Museum of Fine Arts: Boston*, Boston, 1964, I, by Hsien-Ch'i Tseng and Robert P. Dart, no. 110.



11

Alkaline-glazed Ware and Its Molds

During the ninth and tenth centuries the glazed pottery of Nishapur was made in many sizes and shapes and decorated in many different styles. Nevertheless, all this production had two things in common. One was the body. No matter what color it acquired in the kiln, it was a natural clay. The other was the glaze. Regardless of its color or lack of color, the glaze always contained a high percentage of lead. Sometime after the close of the Samanid period, which in Nishapur was at the end of the tenth century, the making of a new kind of ware began. It is distinguishable from the old wares (the making of which continued, though on a reduced scale) in body, glaze, and prevailing color.

The new body—white, gritty, and hard—was composed for the most part of silica in the form of finely ground quartz, with perhaps a slight admixture of clay. The whiteness of this composed body was such that the potters, hitherto depending on a white engobe for a reflecting surface beneath a transparent colorless glaze, could paint designs directly on the body. In cases where the composed body was not sufficiently white, an engobe might be added, but this step was rarely necessary. The new body had other appreciated qualities. One of these was its suitability for the production of thin-walled vessels by means of molds, and this form of pottery enjoyed great popularity. The new body was also well suited to take the new glaze, which had alkali, rather than lead, as the main fluxing agent. An alkaline glaze does not fit a natural clay body well, but on the new gritty body it penetrated and fused in a way that precluded spalling.

In the excavated pieces covered with colorless or nearly colorless glazes it is usually quite easy to distinguish an alkaline glaze from a lead glaze. The delicate soap-bubble iridescence that marks the transparent lead glazes is not to be seen in the alkaline; instead, unless the piece is perfectly preserved, there is a partially opaque iridescence and often a pitting of the surface. When the alkaline

glaze is thick, it tends to have a fat, soapy appearance—a condition associated with the presence of borax. Borax, the word coming from the Arabic *buraq* and the Persian *bureh*, was mentioned by Abu'l Qasim Abdallah in 1301 as one of the materials used by the potters of Kashan (H. Ritter, J. Ruska, F. Sarre & R. Winderlich, *Orientalische Steinbücher und persische Fayencetechnik*, Istanbul, 1935, p. 32). The alkaline glaze was prepared in a different way from the lead glaze, whose ingredients were simply ground fine, mixed with a little water, and poured over the vessel. Since alkaline glazes contain water-soluble ingredients, they are fritted. That is, the appropriate materials, including borax, whiting, feldspar, and flint, are melted down to form an insoluble glass. This material, when ground, becomes the basis for the glaze (C. F. Binns, *The Potter's Craft*, New York, 1950, p. 95).

The characteristic colors of the alkaline glazes of Nishapur are light blue, dark blue, and less often, purple. A colorless or nearly colorless glaze was also manufactured. Nishapur apparently did not make a green alkaline glaze. The potters continued to use copper as a base, but instead of producing a clear green, as it did with a lead flux, the copper produced a light transparent blue. In Nishapur this blue was intense, surpassing that of a similar glaze made in Rayy (Pope, *Survey*, II, p. 1625). This was by far the commonest color associated with the new technique. Second to it was a dark blue obtained from cobalt—a base that had not been used before in Nishapur despite the fact that it had been used in the opaque white wares of Iraq, pieces of which were imported to Nishapur. Manganese, used in this earlier ware to produce a near-black pigment, mostly in underglaze painting, was now combined with an alkaline glaze to make a clear purple. The color yellow appears rarely in the alkaline glazes of Nishapur, and brown, never. The colorless alkaline glazes were sometimes streaked with dark blue radial lines. Other color variations were achieved by painting in black, beneath either a colorless

or colored glaze. Occasionally the inside and outside of a piece were glazed with different colors (4). In summary it may be said that the variety in color achieved by slip painting in the lead-glazed ware of the Samanid period was not equaled in this later ware. Furthermore, the ware as a whole never reached the peak of excellence in Nishapur that it attained in Kashan nor did it achieve the variety of decoration found there.

Although for the potters of the eleventh century the hard white quartz body was an innovation, it was not entirely a new invention. For example, it was not unlike a body used in ancient Egypt, this one consisting of about ninety percent silica, the rest natron (A. Lucas, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries*, London, 1934, p. 101). Somewhat similar gritty bodies had been made in other countries in the pre-Islamic period: Iraq, Syria, and western (but not eastern) Iran. All of these were less white than the Egyptian body—particularly so the gritty yellowish body of the Parthian glazed pottery from Susa. In the alkaline-glazed ware of Nishapur only large tiles and thick-walled vessels show a comparable lack of whiteness, and in these the body contains more natural clay and sand and less white quartz.

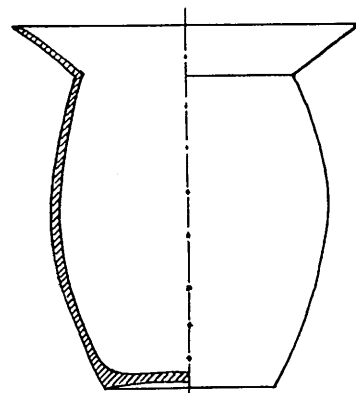
The new body and glaze were also used by the potters of Gurgan, Rayy, and Kashan. In Kashan the quartz pebbles, according to Abu'l Qasim Abdallah's account of 1301 (Ritter, Ruska, Sarre & Winderlich, *Orientalische Steinbücher und persische Fayencetechnik*, Istanbul, 1935, p. 35), were called *shekar sang* (sugar stone). This name suits perfectly the fragments found in the excavations of the kilns in Nishapur.

The new potting technique was practiced as far west as Egypt (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, p. 23) and Syria, where, at Raqqa, a considerable amount of lead seems to have been added to the glaze, judging from the report of J. Sauvaget (*Ars Islamica*, XIII, pp. 31–45). Nishapur, or at least Khurasan, appears to have been the easternmost producer of the new ware, and with its development there the once-close link between the potters of Nishapur and those of Transoxiana was loosened.

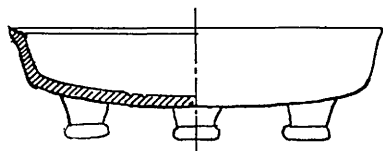
It is possible that the ceramic revolution of the alkaline-glazed ware was due to the efforts of Iranian potters to copy the imported Chinese *ch'ing pai* ware, with its white body and slightly blue glaze. The potters of Iraq and Iran had successfully copied at least the appearance of Chinese wares in the ninth and tenth centuries, so it is not unlikely that this imitation was continued in the eleventh century. Whereas Iraq excelled in the copies of the earlier period, it was Iran that produced the finest pieces later. As far as Nishapur itself is concerned, this supposition of copying is supported by the finding of several pieces of true *ch'ing pai* ware in the excavations, some of them, perhaps significantly, in the kiln area. It

would, of course, be unsound to base a theory on these finds, for experience in the digging of Islamic sites has shown the danger of making deductions from chance finds, from finds in areas that have been partially dug before, and especially from finds in areas that in ancient times were pierced and repierced with wells and sink-aways. Nevertheless, considering the admiration of the Islamic world for Chinese porcelain, the Chinese-imitation theory is a plausible one. But, as with the wares of the ninth and tenth centuries, the Iranian potters, including those of Nishapur, having developed a ware that resembled the Chinese originals in a superficial way, proceeded to develop the product in their own fashion. Of none of the alkaline-glazed ware found in the excavations could it be said that it attempted to truly copy Chinese wares.

Objects of many kinds were made in Nishapur in the new ware: bowls, dishes, pitchers, jars, vases, lamps, candlesticks, and even amulets. Their shapes are not, in general, the same as those seen in the lead-glazed wares. This was in part due to changes in taste. A new type of jar was developed that is decorated with narrow vertical flutes (11–13, 15, 19), and small near-spherical jars were manufactured to which the potter added dimples by pressing in the wall either with his finger or a tool. This latter practice was paralleled in the unglazed earthenware of the eleventh and twelfth centuries (Group 12, 25). In the glazed vessels dimpling affects the color, a deeper tone occurring where the glaze gathers in the cavity (14). With the introduction of this ware small lamps were slightly changed in shape, their spouts being more closely pinched than formerly (5, 9). A form of hanging lamp, hitherto known only in glass, was now made (4). A new form of candlestick was introduced: one with a high circular base, open at the bottom, sloping in toward the top, and surmounted by a socket (17), the form as a whole derived from metalwork. An uncommon type of vase with a very wide rim, possibly used as a hand spittoon, was indubitably made in Nishapur, since a waster of one was found:



Another innovation was a flower vase with orifices around the top, though often these are in the form of supplementary tubes that do not open into the body of the vessel (24). Small three-footed shallow dishes were manu-



1:3

factured locally and were found in various sites; their wasters were found by the kilns. A more potent reason than taste for changes in shape may well have been the introduction of molds. Little used in the tenth century, these were now made in great number both for glazed and unglazed wares. Their manufacture in Nishapur has been established by the discovery of some of the kilns that made them. It is possible to distinguish between molds made for glazed and unglazed pottery not only by where they were found—which was far apart—but by the way in which they were made. Most of the molds intended for unglazed pottery were shaped and then imprinted with repeated impressions of small dies. Those for glazed pottery, aside from a few in which the direction was cut directly with a pointed tool (as it was, too, on occasion in the group for unglazed pottery), were made from master models. Such a model might be made either of the same gritty material of which the ware itself was made (66) or of wood (59). The molds were made either of well-levigated natural clay (57) or a gritty composed body (60, 61) like that used for the ware itself. The discovery of master models in Nishapur proves that molds for glazed vessels were made there. It does not prove that all the molds found there were locally produced. As a result of Russian excavations in Turkmenistan (Pugachenkova, *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*, 2, 1958, pp. 78–91), it is known that molds traveled from one town to another. It is also known that the potter, who in some cases signed his models, also traveled from one place to another (Bahrami, *Athār-e Īrān*, III, pp. 209–229). Two signed molded pots found in Rayy are in the Metropolitan (62.227.1, 2).

One result of the use of molds was a great increase in the production of small, almost flat, saucerlike dishes (33, 36, 37) and of bowls with extremely thin sides (1, 2, 18, 20, 35). None of these are easily made by simple throwing and turning on the wheel. The bowls are sometimes furnished with a flattened rim (38), and they usually have a high foot ring, though this was never made so high or thin as it was on vessels in Kashan. Bowls flare from the base, usually with some convexity; 77 is a mold for this type. For a signed jug of similar shape, possibly from

Kashan (*Erickson Exhibition Catalogue*, p. 28, no. 28) and a bowl signed Hasan al-Qashani from Iran, see *Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, fig. 13. It is the convex wall that distinguishes the Nishapur product from that of Kashan. The Kashan bowls were exported to Gurgan but not to Nishapur, or only rarely so, a fact that underlines the importance of Nishapur as a ceramic center during the period when her kilns were producing alkaline-glazed ware.

The practice of graffiato decoration continued in the present ware, but the patterns are less conspicuous than in the older wares. This is because the scratched line no longer penetrates a white engobe to a darker body beneath, but to a body as white as the surface itself. The scratched patterns show fairly well under a blue glaze; under a nearly colorless glaze (37) they are hard to see. In Nishapur the potters of this ware, unlike their predecessors of the Samanid period, supplemented their graffiato patterns with small pricked holes. (These filled with glaze during firing and the vessel's serviceability was not affected.) The piercing of holes was done from the inside, the process causing the exterior wall to flake (1). In Nishapur this pierced work was never used except in conjunction with graffiato decoration, and it never developed into true openwork, a technique skillfully practiced in Kashan (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 39B). The techniques of graffiato and piercing advanced to a certain point in Nishapur and then progressed no further.

Still another development in the new ware was the cutting or carving of designs, as an alternative to scratching them. Some of the simpler designs, consisting of bands of alternating depressed and raised areas, were perhaps even made with a roulette (33). The depressions in others were more likely individually cut out (42, 52), and they almost certainly were carved when the patterns were elaborate foliations (35). In some cases the effect of cutting or carving is the result of this technique used on the master model (66) or on the mold made from such a model (65). This decoration in relief is sometimes on several levels. In 65, for example, the background is most deeply cut, the major decoration less deeply, and the embellishments are on the shallowest level. Despite the complexity of this type, the designs cut on a single level, or at most on two levels, are the most masterly.

The decoration to be seen in the alkaline-glazed ware differs in several ways from that of the older wares. The foliation has the peculiarities of its time: the exaggerations of the tips of the leaves are greater than in the lead-glazed wares. There is a greater use of circular stems to enclose foliage or flowerlike forms. Inscriptions are now set against backgrounds of delicate foliations that are sometimes made livelier by the introduction of birds and animals. Naskhi writing is now commonly used, though Kufic continues. The small disparate decorative motifs so

common in the lead-glazed wares, especially in the buff, are now entirely absent. The decoration may consist of a simple geometrical pattern, or it may be entirely of leafy forms. There may be a contrast of motifs, one dominant, one subordinate, such as human beings, animals, or lettering against a foliate background. The subordinate material, however, is always drawn in an orderly, consistent way. The foliations grow over the background, for example, as ivy grows on a wall. The division into quadrants so popular in the Samanid period, and even in the luster phases of the lead-glazed wares, seems to have no place in the present ware as made in Nishapur. The ornament of curling stems with added spots (16) differs in form from this ornament in the buff and other lead-glazed wares; the ornament closely resembles the Arabic letter *wau*, with interspaced spots. The connections between this group and the preceding wares are few indeed. One parallel worth noting occurs between 50 here and 24 in Group 8, where the curled-up leafy details have a good deal in common; see also 63 in Group 9. Calligraphy seems to play a less important role in the alkaline-glazed than in the lead-glazed wares. Even when it is a dominant motif (58), it is placed on a ground that vies for attention.

The East Kilns, where alkaline-glazed ware was made, were roughly circular in plan, and they were domed. The interior wall was furnished with specially made bricks with a circular hole in the face, intended to receive and hold an earthenware baton. These holed bricks were placed in horizontal rings around the chamber: three rings in the large kilns, two or one in the smaller ones (Figure 17, page xxxviii). The sun-dried pieces to be fired were placed on the shelves formed by the protruding batons. Some seem to have been wedged in place with pats of clay; others were placed upon clay stilts, three-pronged stands with upturned tips (71). Other pieces were placed in saggars, roughly made earthenware containers. The use of saggars in Nishapur was an innovation accompanying the introduction of alkaline-glazed ware. Sometimes the saggars were made in the shape of the vessel or vessels to be placed in them; as a result, when the glazed vessels collapsed, as they sometimes did, they stuck to the saggars like a skin (76). Pieces of broken saggars seem to have been another kind of support for wares stacked in the kilns (73).

The kilns were fired through an egg-shaped orifice near the base, accessible to the potter at the end of a narrow trench. Some of the kilns, built in pairs, were fired from either end of a single trench. The firing hole led to a central pit in the kiln in which the fuel was placed. This was probably *boteh*, a thorny plant that burns with a fierce flame and is used today in Persian kilns. In a large kiln the firing pit had a benchlike addition at the bottom, the purpose of which is now unknown.

Between the rim of the pit and the dome was a flat space, wide enough to have shafts sunk in it. In one case one of these shafts had broken into the fuel pit and had been sealed. The purpose of these shafts is no longer known; perhaps they gave the potter means to regulate his fire. The space between pit and dome appears to have been much narrower in the kilns at Kashan (Bahrami, *Athār-e Īrān*, III, figs. 141–143), and in the kilns at Gurgan this feature did not occur at all (Bahrami, *Gurgan Faïences*, pl. 10).

Close by the kilns in Nishapur were the potters' workshops. In their ruins were found molds, master models, and related fragments. Some of these indicated the manufacture of wares superior in quality to any that were recovered from the kilns.

We come now to the problem of dating the alkaline-glazed ware. In one of the shafts of the large kiln were found three silver coins, one struck with the name of Mas'ud I, the Ghaznavid (reigned 1030–41) and two with the name of Caliph al-Qasim (1031–74). Allowing for a lapse of time after minting, the coins suggest that the kilns were operating at the end of the eleventh century. But, as noted earlier (Introduction, page xxvi), contrary to the assumptions of many writers who report on Islamic excavations, such finds yield little precise information, and these three particular coins do not help us to know when the alkaline-glazed ware was introduced into Nishapur or where or when it was first made. More helpful here is the circumstantial evidence that Nishapur was a very important place under Toghril Beg, the Seljuqid, who made it his capital in 1038, having the public prayer said in his name. In 1055 Toghril Beg had his name pronounced sultan in Baghdad. During the next twenty years his Seljuq empire extended until it included not only the whole of Iran and Iraq but western Asia up to the frontier of the Byzantines and the Fatimid caliphs in Egypt. This surely was the period in which this new ware was developed and spread so widely. It is perhaps significant that Nishapur is the easternmost city of importance where the ware was made—with the possible exception of Merv. In view of the fact that the Seljuqs had trouble keeping control of Transoxiana, no matter how dominant they were in the west, and more particularly because Nishapur was on the eastern rim of this empire, it is doubtful that the new ware, despite the excellence of some of the pieces found there, originated either in Nishapur or elsewhere in Khurasan.

The complete absence of certain kinds of superior alkaline-glazed wares known to have been made in Kashan—such as the best pierced ware with its masterly drawing of arabesques and plaited bands, a simple type with bold radiating stripes, and luster ware, except for a few fragments—gives ground for speculation. It seems

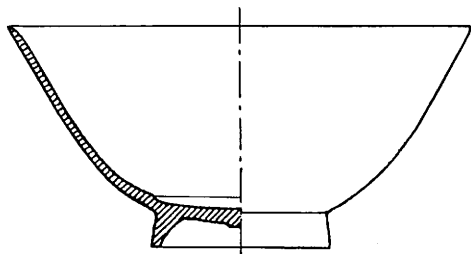
improbable that Nishapur was so enamored of its own wares that it had no desire to import from Kashan, and, as we know that Gurgan did import a great deal of these wares and Nishapur did not, a probable reason would be that it was financially crippled by the earthquakes of the twelfth century. One problem that seems difficult to explain is that despite the fact that molds of superior quality exist, such as 57, 58, which could conceivably have been imported from Kashan. Few such fine molds were found in Nishapur. The absence of such pieces may also indicate that the areas excavated, including the East Kilns, were destroyed, not by the Mongols in the second decade of the thirteenth century, but by the disastrous earthquakes of 1145, and that subsequent to the quakes and the sacking in 1153, these areas were completely abandoned.

The excavations at Nishapur at least give no evidence that the ware was manufactured there earlier than the eleventh century. Even then, the second half of the century would be the more likely. This is interesting in that it has been claimed (Shelkovnikov, *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*, 1, 1958, pp. 214-227) that this glazed "faience"

with a hard body, and a related ware with a soft white body (both wares apparently covered with an alkaline glaze) were manufactured at Dvin and Ani in Armenia in the tenth and eleventh centuries, before the coming of the Seljuqs. There is considerable resemblance between some of these pieces and those of Nishapur, but also sufficient difference to show that they were not made in one place. The early date advanced for the Armenian ware is not impossible, though in my opinion unlikely. Nonetheless, Armenia seems a more likely place of origin than Khurasan. Rayy may also be in the running, but so far, in spite of the excavations undertaken there, precise information on this point has still not come to light. As for Kashan, this center that achieved such excellence in alkaline-glazed ware has been woefully neglected in the matter of actual controlled excavation. At present nothing from there can be relied on as being of positive evidence of manufacture in the eleventh century. As to Nishapur, it seems likely that the alkaline-glazed ware was made there in the latter part of the eleventh century and throughout the twelfth.

1 BOWL

D 18.2, H 8.8 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.188

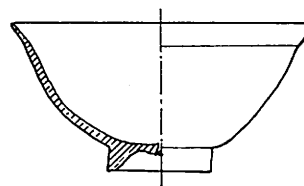


1:3

Gritty, pure white body consisting largely of powdered quartz. Clear bright blue alkaline glaze derived from copper base. Mold-made, the piece very thin. The sides, slightly convex, taper to a small base. The high foot ring is unglazed. Around the wall, a band defined top and bottom by a pair of rings. Within it, swags filled with loosely drawn floral patterns alternate with a U-shape. The decoration was first incised, then pricked, the pricking causing flaking on the exterior surface. The pricked holes are filled with glaze.

The shape of the bowl is common in this ware but rare in the lead-glazed wares, occurring there only in bowls of the eleventh century (Group 9, 51). The incising and pricking technique is common in the alkaline-glazed ware,

being used even in poorly made bowls (50). The swaglike design was probably first used in the yellow-tinted lead-glazed ware not before the end of the tenth century, more probably in the eleventh (Group 8, 3). The shape of 1 appears in bowls of other sizes, some of which were colored pale yellow:



1:3

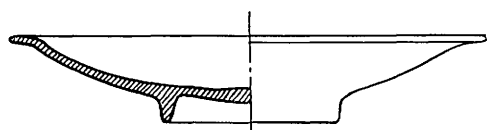
2 BOWL

D 19.4, H 9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Gritty white body, clear bright blue glaze. From the base, which has a foot ring, the sides flare widely to form a large bottom, then rise nearly vertically. On the exterior near the rim are two circumscribing grooves, a feature not found in the lead-glazed wares of Nishapur. This is the only decoration.

3 DISH (minor restoration)

D 16.15, H 4.4 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 36.20.13

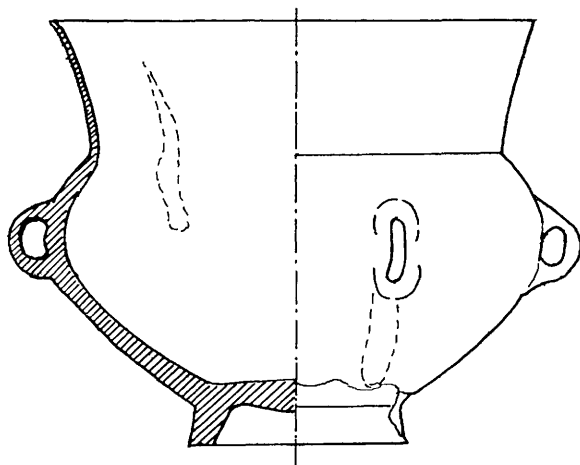


1:3

Gritty white body, clear bright blue glaze. Mold-made. Base has a foot ring. Sides flare out almost horizontally. Flat rim. Slight circular depression on bottom. Decoration: a degenerate Kufic inscription, the letters extending downward from a pair of circumscribing lines near the rim. Because the piece was stacked at an angle in the kiln, the glaze has pooled on one side, there obliterating the decoration. On the exterior the glaze extends most of the way to the foot ring, ending in a thick ridge. Fragments of molds that made dishes of this shape were found in the kiln area. Such dishes were decorated in various ways, some simply with circular bands of indented squares (33, 52) or crisscross lines. Similarly shaped dishes found at Rayy are glazed a lighter, less brilliant blue than those of Nishapur.

4 LAMP

Original D 21.6, H 16.8 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MIB



1:3

Gritty white body. Exterior and interior glazed bright blue, bottom purple. Two purple streaks on the interior wall are possibly accidental. Spheroidal shape with flaring neck. Slight ridge at collar. Base has foot ring. Originally there were six vertical loop handles for suspension purposes. The lamp was made without a cylindrical wick holder. However, such wick holders were incorporated in glass lamps of the ninth century excavated in Nishapur, one of which (study fragments) is in the Metropolitan. 4 was found in a location indicating late eleventh or twelfth century. Alkaline-glazed pitchers of somewhat

similar shape, with spout added, were made in Iran in the twelfth century (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 38A).

5 LAMP

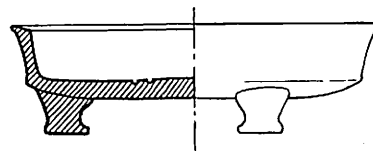
H 10.2, W 8.3 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 37.40.19

Gritty white body, bright turquoise blue glaze. Piece consists of a vertical-sided circular dish from which rises a column upon which the lamp is placed; a straplike handle connects the body of the lamp to the rim of the dish. The form is essentially that of many lead-glazed lamps of the earlier Samanid period but different in the more emphatic pinching of the spout to hold the wick. In the alkaline-glazed lamps the sides of the spout almost touch. Lamps such as this were made in great number in Nishapur, some with a light blue, others with a dark blue glaze, some with a decoration painted in black beneath a colorless or blue glaze. Not earlier than eleventh century. A related form of lamp was also made in Afrasiyab, with the peculiarity of having an extra ring handle at the top (Stoliarov Photograph 5, row C, nos. 4, 5, page 368). No such lamp was found at Nishapur.

6 DISH

D 8.2 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Gritty white body. Dark blue glaze, the coloring agent cobalt. Circular well, flat rim. No decoration. Found with 7. Another type, of which many examples were found, is furnished with three feet and lacks the projecting rim. It was made in great quantity with either a turquoise or dark blue glaze.



1:3

7 MINIATURE POT

D 5.5 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Spheroidal body with small, high base, short neck, mouth the width of the base. Clear blue glaze. Decoration: a rough scalelike pattern painted in black beneath the glaze. Found with 6. Even smaller pots of this type were found, some no more than three centimeters in diameter.

8 DISH

D 9 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Gritty white body, dark blue glaze. Mold-made. Base has foot ring. Bottom and wall decorated as a many-petaled rosette. Flat rim decorated with a braid.

9 LAMP

L 8 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.126

Gritty white body, clear blue glaze. Tightly pinched spout (compare 5) and small ringlike handle so placed that it does not project above the rim. Both these features typical of the late eleventh and the twelfth century. Nishapur lamps of the ninth and tenth centuries (Group 9, 14–16, 18, 19) have open spouts and large loop handles that rise above the rims. Lamps similar to 9 were also made with a handle sticking up like a small horn.

10 LID

D 19, H 13.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Gritty white body. Clear light blue glaze. Mold-made. Above the vertical sleeve, which is unglazed, a horizontal flange, undecorated. Above the flange, a vertical collar decorated with a cable in low relief. The conical area above this is decorated with curling stems from which grow small leaves, the stems ending in pointed palmettes. Above this (and below the missing knob), a band of short radial ridges. Twelfth century. A waster of a similar lid (54), found at the kilns that produced this ware, confirms that lids with relief decoration were locally manufactured.

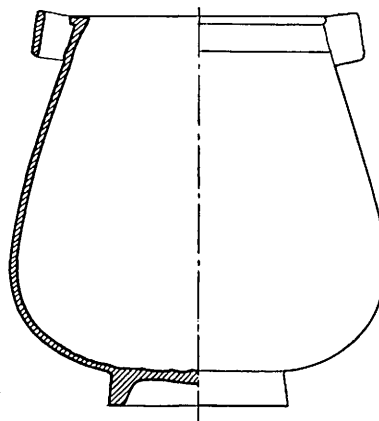
11 JAR

H 20, D 14.3 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 37.40.18

Gritty white body, covered inside and outside, except foot and base, with transparent light blue glaze, crackled. The sides, decorated with shallow flutes, probably made by a thumb or fingertip, flare slightly as they rise to the high shoulder, which is marked with a groove. The neck narrows upward to a projecting lip. The glaze has formed irregular thick blobs on and near the foot ring. Jars of this shape, made in Nishapur, were common in various sizes. Jars resembling them were also made at Rayy and perhaps at Gurgan. For an example from Afrasiyab, see Stoliarov Photograph 1, row B, no. 6, (page 366).

12 JAR

H 15.7, D 15.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.163



1:3

Gritty white body, covered inside and outside, except foot and base, with green-tinged blue glaze, crackled. Sides flare to greatest width not far above the foot ring, then, flattening into flutes, taper upward to a short plain collar and projecting lip. A less common shape than 11. The two thin horizontal loop handles attached close beneath the lip may have served for attaching a lid, but more probably were for suspension purposes. Handles of this type were also attached to lead-glazed cylindrical jars (see drawing, page 229). The blackening of the crackle suggests that 12 once stored oil.

13 JAR

H 14.2, D 11 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 38.40.293

Gritty white body, covered inside and outside, except for foot and base, with dark blue glaze. The color was produced by the introduction of cobalt. Paneled, slightly flaring sides. Except that it lacks a groove on the shoulder, a smaller version of 11. Made in Nishapur.

14 JAR

D 6.3, H 5.4 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 36.20.34

Gritty white body, brilliant blue glaze. Glaze covers interior but extends little more than halfway down the exterior. Flat base, high foot, spheroidal body, small collar, projecting round lip. Decoration of vertical tool-made indentations around the waist. Such small pieces were made in great number in Nishapur, perhaps at the end of the eleventh century, certainly in the twelfth. Some of them were adorned with circular indentations made by a fingertip instead of a tool, an interesting, simple, and highly effective form of decoration. This fashion of dimpling is also to be seen in the unglazed ware of the same period (Group 12, 25, 39, 64).

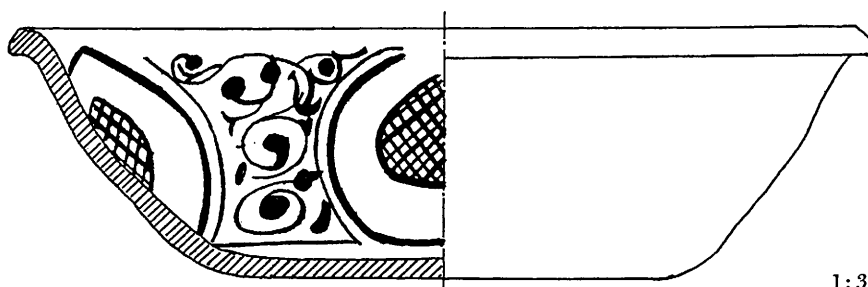
15 JAR

H 7.3, D 6.3 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 36.20.33

Gritty white body, covered inside and outside with clear blue glaze, crackled. Flat base. Sides, flattened into vertical planes, curve upward to high, plain shoulder. Rounded projecting lip.

16 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 31 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB



Not the usual gritty white body, instead a natural clay that has burned buff. Concave base. White engobe, black painting under clear blue glaze. Rim decorated with line of spots. Flaring wall decorated with crosshatched pear-shaped forms enclosed within strongly outlined forms (originally six in number) of similar shape. The intervening areas are filled with thin curling lines adorned with irregular leaflike additions. In the center of the bowl, enclosed within a ring, some curved, tapered strokes, some with divided "tails," resembling fish. Twelfth century. The pear-shaped forms on the wall were popular on early thirteenth-century luster bowls of Kashan, elaborated with stems and dotted borders (Bahrami, *Gurgan Faiences*, pl. LXI). The crude leafy forms on the curling lines resemble those on luster wares of Rayy made in the late twelfth century or beginning of the thirteenth (Pope, *Survey*, V, pls. 631 A, 636 A,B, 637 A). They had been preceded in Nishapur by a superficially similar decoration in the buff ware, in which the "leaves" generally appeared in conjunction with small V-shapes (Group 1, 34, 42, 43).

17 CANDLESTICK

D 30, H 19.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.107

Gritty white body, black underpainting, clear blue glaze. Hollow underside of piece glazed but undecorated. Body in form of a truncated cone. Studded with rosette knobs, molded separately, then affixed, a ceramic echo of the bosses to be seen in twelfth- and thirteenth-century metalwork (Pope, *Survey*, VI, pl. 1321). Here, their presence is emphasized by their being painted black. Painted between the knobs, a more careful version of the leaflike

decorations seen on 16. Some of the forms show the little projecting strokes that occur in generally similar decorations in luster painting of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 54C). This candlestick is probably of the same period.

18 DISH

D 14, H 6 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

Gritty white body, turned very thin. High, neatly made foot ring. Clear blue glaze inside and outside, except for

foot and base. Decoration in underglaze black. Interweaving straps divide surface into seven circles. These, bisected by a narrow bar, are filled with curling forms. A heavy line is painted around the rim. Decoration on the exterior consists of groups of three vertical lines. Probably end of twelfth century or early thirteenth. A more elaborate version of the strap and circle decoration occurs on a Kashan bowl dated 1214 (Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 84B).

19 JAR

H 14, D 7.6 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

Gritty white body. Transparent blue glaze. Clearly defined foot, sides shallowly fluted, tapering neck, projecting lip. The alternate flutes are colored black, the coloring continuing up the shoulder and neck. In shape close to 11 and 13. Made in Nishapur. Fragments found in the vicinity of the kilns that produced such pieces showed other combinations such as blue and white flutes or black and white. A number of bowls decorated in blue and white stripes, possibly imported from Kashan, were found at Gurgan (Bahrami, *Gurgan Faiences*, pl. XIII), but no such bowls were found in Nishapur—a fact very hard to explain.

20 a,b BOWL

D 10.9, H 5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Gritty white body, light blue glaze over dark blue painting, the dark blue derived from cobalt. The flaring convex wall rises from a foot ring. On the bottom, a motif based on a cross consisting of four pear shapes, each containing

a central spot, the spots connected to one another by an outcurving semicircle. Four trifoliate forms are spaced around the wall. A band painted at the rim has run irregularly. No decoration on exterior. Found in an area occupied until the end of the twelfth century and perhaps a little later. Probably late twelfth century.

21 BOWL

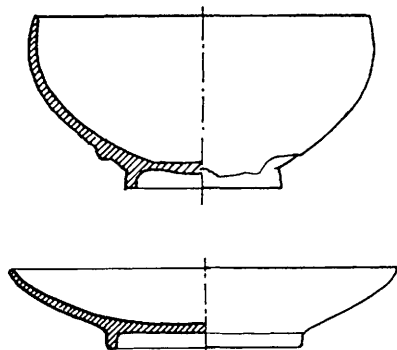
D 20.3, H 8 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 37.40.14

Gritty white body. Clear, strong blue glaze, crackled. On the exterior the glaze stops short of the foot ring, ending in a thick ridge, as in many examples of this ware. Shape of bowl hemispherical, with everted lip. Underglaze painting in black. Four panels of pseudo inscription encircle the wall. These have little resemblance to Arabic and are perhaps closer to Hebrew. Compare pseudo inscription on 24. The form of writing has some relation to the fanciful treatment of Arabic lettering seen on a piece from Samarra (*Excavations at Samarra, 1936-1939*, II, pl. LXXVIII). On the rim of 21 are groups of three black blobs (originally there were four groups), an ornament occurring on other bowls of this ware (22, 34). Probably twelfth century.

22 BOWL

D 13.8, H 9.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.3

Gritty gray body, black underpainting, clear blue glaze. The base has a foot ring. Shape of bowl hemispherical, lip not everted. Decoration: four radial lines crossing at center and groups of three blobs at rim (for the last, compare 21, 34). Exterior undecorated, with glaze stopping short of foot ring. Bowls of this shape and with this simple decoration were made in quantity in Nishapur during the twelfth and into the thirteenth century. The best-made ones, and perhaps all of them, were fired in saggars. The kiln in which they were made was not that in which the molded and pricked vessels (1, 50) were



1:3

1:3

made. Some examples, including another from Tepe Madraseh, are somewhat deeper and undecorated; others,

also undecorated, are shallower, for example, one from the Village Tepe with dark blue glaze.

23 JAR

H 13.3, D 15.3 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 36.20.47

Gritty white body, black underpainting, clear blue glaze, crackled. Glaze covers inside and outside, stopping well short of base. Body flares from definitely marked foot ring to high shoulder, then slopes to neck that tapers to a flat projecting rim. On the neck, between encircling lines, a poorly drawn cable pattern (compare cable on 10). The shoulder is decorated with boldly drawn open circles, the spaces between them filled with irregular curves dotted with circular spots, an ornament reminiscent of 16. The edge of the shoulder is marked with indentations. From an encircling line below the shoulder vertical strokes of black extend toward the base; the ends of some of these strokes project beyond the limit of the glaze.

24 VASE

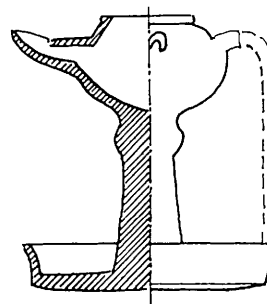
H 15.3, D 15 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

Gritty white body, black underpainting, clear bright blue glaze, crackled. Globular shape with clearly defined foot ring. Rim flares slightly from collar marked by groove. Three decorative projections rise from shoulder to level of rim. Such excrescences are common on Islamic vases. Sometimes, though not in Nishapur examples, they open into the vessel's interior. On the shoulder, a pseudo inscription showing little resemblance to Kufic (compare 21). Made in Nishapur: fragments of similar vases of finer quality were found in the East Kilns area.

25 LAMP

H 11.4, D 10.1 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 36.20.16

Natural clay, fired red, light turquoise blue glaze. Has the closely pinched spout typical of lamps in this ware (compare 5, 9). On the column, just below the upper attachment of the handle, a projecting ring, the lamp's only decoration. Not earlier than eleventh century. Another lamp of this general shape, found in the Village Tepe, is

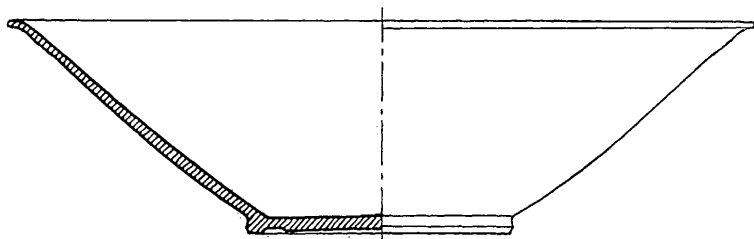


1:3

in the Teheran museum; it has an open spout rather than a pinched one and it is decorated on the sides with a pair of animal horns in low relief.

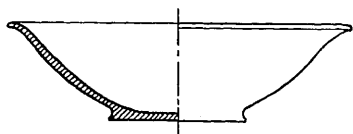
26 BOWL

D 25, H 10.9 cm ; Village Tepe
Discarded

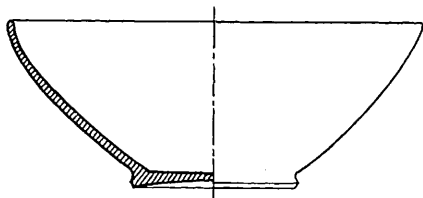


1:3

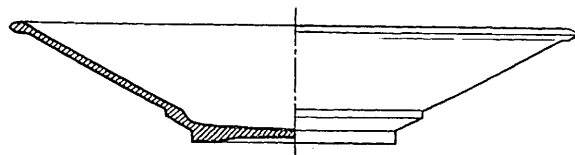
Natural clay fired red, opaque turquoise blue glaze, crackled and spalled. Much iridescence, indicating that the glaze contains a fair amount of alkali. Walls flare to an outcurving rim. The spalling (compare 32) is due entirely to the incompatibility of the alkaline glaze and natural body. In extreme cases in this ware the glaze "crawls" and forms islands, a defect erroneously described in a report on the excavations at Ctesiphon as imitating mosaics (Berlin Museen, *Die Ausgrabungen der Zweiten Ktesiphon-Expedition*, Winter, 1931/32, fig. 43). Several variations of 26 were found, some with more convex profile, others of more complex shape:



1:3



1:3



1:3

27 SIX-HANDLED JAR

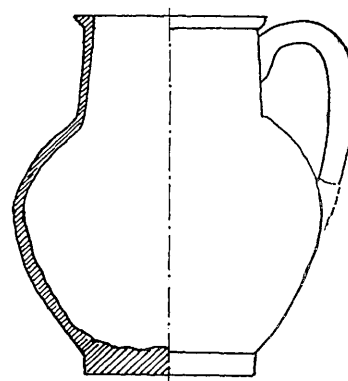
H 25, D 17.4 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 38.40.292

Natural clay fired red with buff surface. Greenish blue

glaze (in poor condition) covers interior and exterior, on the latter to an uneven line above the foot. Two circumscribing grooves, one at the shoulder, the other at the collar of the high, wide neck. The handles attach to the body just below the lower groove. Three of them join the neck halfway up; the alternate handles, surmounted by thumbknobs, attach further up. Probably eleventh or twelfth century.

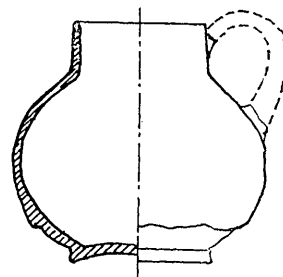
28 PITCHER

H 15.3, W 13.2 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan
Discarded



1:3

Natural clay fired pinkish. Turquoise blue glaze. A poorly made piece of a shape that was never left unglazed. Groove on shoulder, vertical neck, projecting lip, plain handle. The second drawing shows another shape of pitcher from the same site:

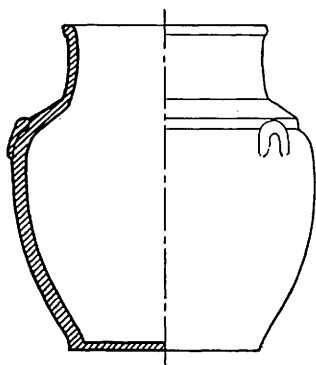


1:3

29 JAR

H 18, D 16.8 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Natural clay fired red, turquoise blue glaze. So poorly fired that it can almost be considered a waster. High shoulder, vertical neck, everted lip. Circumscribing groove and three curved lugs (two visible in the illustration) on shoulder. Lugs such as these figure in Islamic pottery from the ninth century on; they are also found in the opaque yellow ware and the opaque white ware of Nishapur (Group 6, 26, drawing; *Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, fig. 2). Eleventh or twelfth century. The drawing is of a very similar jar, but with yellow instead of red body,



1:3

light blue glaze, and narrow vertical collar, found at Sabz Pushan.

30 THREE-HANDLED JAR

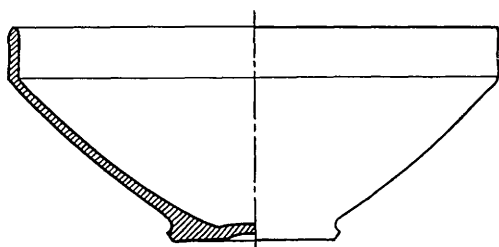
H 25, D 25 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Natural clay fired pinkish, turquoise blue glaze. Globular body with pronounced foot, vertical neck with slightly everted lip. Small, plain handles on shoulder, ridge at collar.

31 DISH

D 18, H 8 cm ; South Horn
MIB

Coarse reddish clay, spotty light blue glaze, considerable iridescence. Glaze covers interior and most of exterior. Sides flare widely from small base; vertical rim. This shape, occurring in both the alkaline-glazed and lead-glazed wares of Nishapur in the tenth and eleventh centuries, had long been popular in the Near East (Debevoise, *Parthian Pottery*, pl. vi, fig. 1). This type of ware was made locally, since examples of it were found at the kiln



1:3

site. The drawing is of a similar piece from the Village Tepe.

32 PITCHER

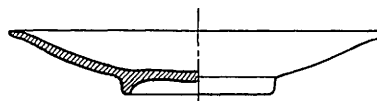
D 15.6, H 24 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.76

Natural clay fired red, uneven light blue transparent glaze, mostly spalled (see comment on this process at 26). Pear-shaped body with clearly defined base; narrow neck

opening into a top with pinched spout. Found near the surface of a shrine that was in use until the thirteenth century. Both location and glaze suggest twelfth century. Although the shape does not seem to occur in the lead-glazed wares of the ninth and tenth centuries, it was very popular in the eleventh and twelfth and was used both for vessels with a natural body, as here, and a composed gritty body (56).

33 a,b DISH

D 14.6, H 2.5 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 37.40.21



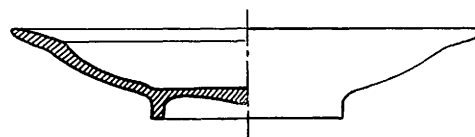
1:3

Gritty white body, transparent colorless glaze, cracked. Mold-made. Base has foot ring, sides flare almost horizontally, rim is flattened. Decoration consists of a band of square depressions near the rim plus five radial streaks of blue. Dishes of this shape and with this glaze (36, 37) were made in quantity in Nishapur.

34 BOWL

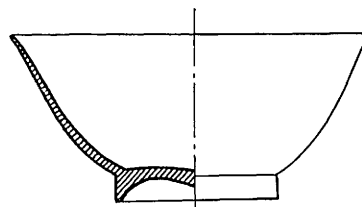
D 14.7, H 9.9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 37.40.2

Gritty white body, transparent glaze with greenish blue tinge, probably the result of cobalt in the painted decoration. Base has foot ring. Rim, flattened, projects beyond the convex wall. Decoration: four groups of triple black blobs (compare 21, 22). A similar but shallower bowl or dish with five groups of triple black blobs came from the



1:3

high level of Tepe Madraseh. Another bowl from Tepe Madraseh, its glaze like that of 34, decorated with black rays and isolated spots, lacks the everted rim of 34:



1:3

35 BOWL

D 16.6, H 8.6 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Gritty white body, colorless transparent glaze inside and

outside, extending only to base on outside. Probably mold-made. Walls very thin. Base, hollowed out to form a foot ring, is higher than those to be found in the older lead-glazed wares of Nishapur. Silhouette of bowl almost parabolic. Band of decoration on the wall, probably carved, consists of an undulating stem from which grow leafy forms, the band defined by double circumscribing lines. Background cut away very shallowly. Several radial streaks of dark blue have been added in the style of 33, 37, 38. Many fragments of such bowls were found, the number suggesting that they were made locally.

36 DISH

D 14.5, H 5 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Gritty white body, practically colorless glaze, crackled. Mold-made. Base has foot ring. Decoration: a few streaks of dark blue. Flat dishes such as this (and 33, 37) were made in quantity in Nishapur.

37 DISH

D 19.5, H 4.2 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.178

Gritty white body, nearly colorless transparent glaze, crackled. Mold-made. Foot ring. Incised decoration around the wall: an undulating stem from which grow curling leaves; circumscribing lines above and below this. Five radial streaks of dark blue added. One of many such dishes (compare 33, 36) made in Nishapur.

38 BOWL

D 23.5, H 10.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Gritty white body. Transparent, faintly blue glaze with slight crackle. Probably mold-made. Base has a foot ring. Body hemispherical. Flat, everted rim. Incised decoration on wall: a broad band of leafy forms enclosed by double circumscribing lines. Five radial streaks of dark blue added. Stacked at a tilt in the kiln; glaze pooled off-center.

A fragmentary bowl found at Ani, in Armenia (Shelkovnikov, *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*, 1, 1958, p. 226, fig. 10), is similarly decorated inside, but the exterior has a petal-like decoration in relief that is unknown in the Iranian versions. The Armenian ware has been dated by B. A. Shelkovnikov as tenth to eleventh century. The tenth-century dating, were it based on solid evidence, would indicate that the ware was first made in Armenia before the Seljuq period.

39 DISH OR PLATTER FRAGMENT (waster)

W 13.2 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.293

Not the usual gritty white body but gray, probably a mixture of clay and fine sand. Part of a large mold-made vessel with thick wall and substantial foot ring. The glaze, greenish blue, has crackled and turned reddish in places from reduction in the kiln. Underglaze painting in black. Decoration in very low relief, parts of it reinforced by painting. The upper band consists of a Kufic inscription, the lower, graceful leafy forms combined with animals. Probably twelfth century. The kiln that produced this waster was not discovered.

40 JAR FRAGMENT

W 5.8 cm ; East Kilns
MIB

Gritty white body, dark blue glaze, crackled. Mold-made. Thin wall, everted lip. Decoration: a Kufic inscription against a ground of delicate conventional foliage.

41 JAR FRAGMENT

W 7.8 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 40.170.542

Gritty white body, dark blue glaze. Mold-made. Very thin wall. Everted lip. Decoration: a Kufic inscription against foliage similar to that of 40, with the addition of birds, some which have human heads. The latter, commonly called sirens or *peri*, are identified in a miniature painting in a didactic work of 1341, *Munis al Ahrar fi-Daqa'iq al-Ash'ar*, as houris. They appear in a Nishapur mold (60) that was also found at the East Kilns. These are the earliest examples of such figures found in the excavations at Nishapur, and neither piece can be dated before the twelfth century, wherefore the statement by M. Bahrami (*Gurgan Faïences*, p. 104) that the earliest occurrence of human-headed birds in Nishapur is on a brick of the ninth century seems without foundation. Human-headed birds of the early tenth century are to be seen in the decoration of an Armenian church at Akhthamat (Sakisian, *Ars Islamica*, VI, p. 82, fig. 27).

Although the human-headed bird appears frequently in Islamic art, the concept was other than Islamic, for it was common in the art of western and Central Asia for many centuries. (For an instance in the seventh-century wall painting at Varaksha in Transoxiana, see T. Talbot Rice, *Ancient Arts of Central Asia*, London, 1965, p. 97, fig. 80, taken from Russian sources.)

The motif was very popular in the art of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, both in the Seljuq empire and in Fatimid Egypt. It is portrayed in various forms and identified by various names, such as *anga*, *bahri*, and *murgh-i-*

adami. The head is sometimes male, sometimes female. (For further data, see E. Baer, *Sphinxes and Harpies in Medieval Islamic Art*, Jerusalem, 1965.)

42 DISH FRAGMENT

W 8 cm ; East Kilns
MIB

Gritty white body, bright blue transparent glaze. Decoration: two incised circumscribing lines near the rim, beneath which are shallow vertical gouges. A common type of dish in Nishapur, made with various glazes: light blue, dark blue, and colorless.

43 JAR FRAGMENT

W 7 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 40.170.543

Gritty white body, transparent blue glaze outside and inside, black painted decoration on outside. Vessel had a globular body and upright rim. Black band on the lip, a thin encircling line beneath this, a row of spots, and a thick line at the collar. The decoration on the shoulder is too fragmentary to reconstruct. No piece with similar decoration was found.

44–48 PENDANTS

W of 46, 6.1 cm ; East Kilns
46, 48, MIB
44, 45, 47, MMA 38.40.256, 7, 8

Gritty white body, brilliant transparent blue glaze. Mold-made. All have a loop at the top for suspension. Such rosettelike ornaments, made in vast number in Nishapur in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, were probably considered jewelry by those who were unable to purchase actual turquoise. Perhaps, also, they were thought effective against the evil eye—the eye being first attracted to the bright color rather than to the person whose neck they adorned. Lightning conductors, as it were, for the powers of evil. The wearing of such rosette ornaments would seem to be a continuation of a custom going back to the second millennium B.C., if not earlier, the ancient ornaments often being of thin gold (Herzfeld, *Iran in the Ancient East*, p. 145, fig. 261, pl. xxx).

49 BOWL

D 10.3, H 5 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.177

Gritty white body. Thin, translucent wall. Glaze has slight blue cast. A single streak of blue on the exterior. Vessel otherwise undecorated. Deeply concave base with sharp edge. A projection of the glaze disturbs the bowl's balance.

The translucence of the body suggests an imitation of Chinese porcelain.

50 BOWL (waster)

D 11, H 5.25 cm ; probably East Kilns
MIB

Gritty white body. Bright blue glaze. Small base with foot ring. Decoration consists of a six-pointed star bounded by two circumscribing grooves near the rim. The triangles between the points of the star are filled with incised, roughly drawn leafy forms, some of whose lines are pricked with dots (compare 1). Many dishes and small bowls with decoration of this kind were found. Some, unlike 50, had everted rims, with the decoration placed in an encircling band near the rim. This particular kind of foliation is also to be seen on fragments of a large lead-glazed bowl (Group 8, 24), discovered in a late-period area of Tepe Madraseh, that may or may not have been made in Nishapur. The same foliation appears on a fragment in the monochrome ware (Group 9, 63).

Bowls similar to 50 but with a pale blue glaze appear to have been found at Dvin, Armenia, where they have been dated to the tenth and eleventh centuries (Shelkovnikov, *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*, 1, 1958, pp. 214–227, fig. 6).

51 FRAGMENT

H 5 cm ; East Kilns
MMA study piece

Gritty white body. Colorless glaze with added streaks of blue. Part of a thin-walled mold-made vessel, decorated with animals. An additional pricked decoration is now barely visible because of disintegration of the glaze. In the Teheran museum is part of a similar but larger bowl on which lions followed one another against a background of conventional foliage.

52 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 6.7 cm ; East Kilns
MIB

Gritty white body. Colorless glaze with added streaks of dark blue. Mold-made. Decoration: two incised lines near rim, below which is a pattern of rectangles in low relief, an elaboration of the decoration on 33.

53 RIM FRAGMENT

H 5 cm ; East Kilns
MMA study piece

Gritty white body. Colorless glaze with added blue splashes. Mold-made. Decoration: Kufic lettering on a pricked ground.

54 LID FRAGMENT (waster)

H 7.5 cm ; East Kilns

MMA 40.170.578

Gritty grayish white body. Nearly colorless glaze with soapy appearance. This fragment indicates that ware of good quality was made in Nishapur. Mold-made. Decoration, in low relief: scrolling stems with leafy forms and palmettes growing from them. Compare 10.

55 PITCHER (?) FRAGMENT

H 7.4 cm ; Qanat Tepe

MMA 40.170.548

Gritty white body. Nearly colorless glaze. Mold-made. A male figure, perhaps a musician, seated cross-legged, enclosed in a multicuspmed medallion. The ground is pricked, the holes filled with glaze. For the placing of such figures at intervals around the body of a pitcher in the unglazed molded ware, see Group 12, 166.

56 PITCHER (waster)

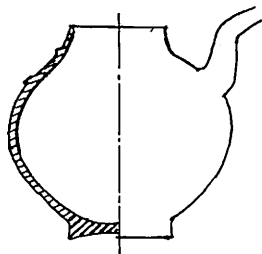
H 18.2, W 12.2 cm ; East Kilns

MMA 40.170.529

Gritty body, originally white, discolored in kiln. Fragments of similar pitchers found in the area indicate that it would have had a turquoise blue glaze. Pear-shaped body with narrow neck and pinched spout. Short, undecorated handle. Base has foot ring.

Popular in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, this shape was also used for pitchers with a natural clay body covered by an alkaline glaze that spalls badly (32). A pitcher similar to 56 in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Beach, *Bulletin of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts*, LXIII, p. 109, fig. 8) has been ascribed to Raqqa but probably came from Nishapur.

A spouted vessel with globular body and, probably, an annular handle, was made in this ware in Nishapur:



1:3

57a MOLD FRAGMENT

H 16.5 cm ; East Kilns

MMA 48.101.5a,b

57b,c modern cast

Smooth, hard, reddish clay. One side of a two-piece mold

with vertical join, for making the body of a ewer or vase, according to the potter's wish. The decoration, in three registers, is divided by encircling bands. Principal decoration, top register: an Arabic inscription in Naskhi; too few letters remain for it to be intelligible. In the central register several human figures appear against a background of elaborate curling foliations, for the most part delicately drawn. In the bottom register, animals, perhaps jackals and lions, are drawn with considerable spirit. The central register is of the greatest interest as the partially depicted scene illustrates a literary subject—that of Farhad and Shirin. (The subject was identified by Dr. Glavira Shepelova of the Hermitage Museum on the basis of her knowledge of a recently excavated, more complete piece found at Hauz-khan.)

Occupying most of the center are two seated male musicians and a standing female, perhaps a dancer, who appears to be holding crotala in her hand. One of the men plays a stringed instrument, the other a reed instrument. All wear headdresses furnished with lappets over the ears. Such lappets were not new in Iranian art; they were depicted in Parthian times and were also common in Central Asia. All of these figures have haloes, the tops of which coincide with the tops of their heads. This arrangement, contrary to Western versions, is common in Iranian art of the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries. The remaining part of this register shows a horse with lowered head. Below the head is a man's booted foot resting on the register's lower band. Above the horse's head, projecting into the top register, is a human head, tipped forward and interrupting the inscription. This head is also enclosed in a halo. Dr. Shepelova has described the subject of the Hauz-khan mold (excavated between Merv and Sarakhs) as that of Farhad carrying his beloved Shirin, the wife of Khusrau, over the river as the story is related by Nizami in his poem, one of the *Khamasa*, written in A.H. 571 (A.D. 1175/76). (The Hauz-khan piece is discussed in an article by G. N. Balashova, "Pottery pitcher of the 12th-13th century with epic scenes," *Kultura i Iskusstvo Srednyaya Aziya i Iran, Sbornik statei*, Leningrad, 1972, pp. 41-106).

As Browne says in his *Literary History of Persia*, it seems likely that Nizami and Firdawsi, who also wrote of the story of Khusrau and Shirin in the *Shah-nama*, but not in an identical way, drew their subject matter from a common source. Connection at an early date of ceramic decoration with themes that are embodied in literary form is interesting—for it is something entirely new in ceramic art. It is known in minai ware, of which there are examples in the twelfth century of Khusrau and Shirin (Pope, *Survey*, V, pls. 664, 672), and also, on an early thirteenth-century cup in the Freer Gallery (38.3), of the story of Bizhan Manizhe from the *Shah-nama* (Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 660 B). The scenes on this beaker were first recognized as illustrating a story from the *Shah-nama* by M. M. Diakonov (*Hermitage Museum: Works of the Oriental Dept.*, I, pp. 317-325) and were fully described

by G. D. Guest in *Ars Islamica*, X, pp. 148–152.

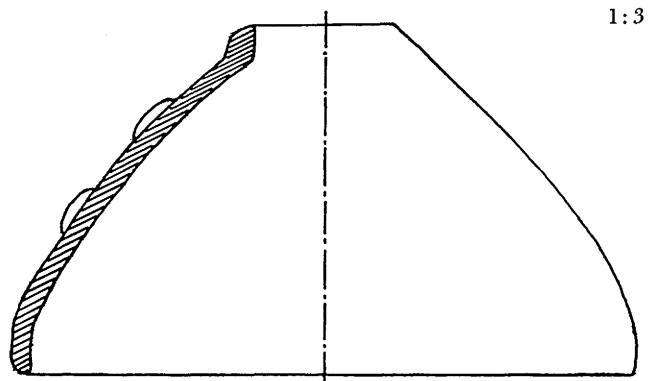
There is a distinct possibility that the molded ware preceded the minai ware in date. In any case, we now know that such subject matter was not confined to those elaborately painted pieces, but appeared also on alkaline-glazed molded ware. The background of the Farhad and Shirin scene with the musicians, as described above, consists of very elegantly drawn foliations arranged in curling forms, almost circular in places, although not in the repetitious way so common in metalwork of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Included in the foliations are elaborate palmettes with emphasized curling tips, typical of Ghaznavid and Seljuq art. Also included in the background are birds, one with long curling tail feathers. They are drawn without the mannerism that typifies the generally comparable birds seen in Kashan luster painting of the thirteenth century. These molds, however, are of the preceding century. Despite the duplication of the Farhad and Shirin motif and a similar background of curling foliations, some differences of style can be noted between the mold found at Hauz-khan and the one found at Nishapur. Making allowance for the poor condition of the Hauz-khan example, it is still noticeable that the quality is somewhat coarser and that no birds appear on it. There is another piece from Nishapur that has a background with foliations and birds (66). It is a master model and must be considered of local manufacture; the work is artistically inferior to that of the pieces under discussion. Nonetheless, there are a number of molded glazed vessels that have a close relationship to this mold. Among them is a ewer in the Metropolitan of very similar shape, decorated with a horseman whose haloed head is depicted against a similar background (Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, May, 1959, p. 239, below); the resemblance is heightened by the presence of a band of Naskhi above the main scene. Also in the Metropolitan, reputedly from Nishapur, is a tankard, related in its main decoration—a Naskhi inscription (Wilkinson, *Iranian Ceramics*, pl. 44). Birds, a small curled-up deer, and a peri with a human face appear on a foliated background. The tankard is encircled beneath the inscription by a guilloche pattern that is similar to one on a pottery fragment found in the excavations (82). A further example of such delicate foliations is to be seen on a cup of uncertain origin in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore (*ibid.*, pl. 43); here they serve as background to a series of animals. Whether this cup was made in Nishapur or, more probably, in Kashan cannot be determined on present evidence alone. A jug or tankard with foliations parallel to those of 57 is in the Erickson collection (*Erickson Exhibition Catalogue*, p. 15, fig. 27). That glazed molded pottery with background foliations was made in Kashan as well as Nishapur is certain, as two deep bowls, each with an octagonal top, apparently the work of one man, are signed Hasan al-Qashani (*Medieval Near Eastern Ceramics*, fig. 13; *Erickson Exhibition Catalogue*, p. 28, no. 28), and it is not at all impossible that this particular type of mold was imported into Nishapur.

58 a,b MOLD FRAGMENT

H 16.6 cm ; East Kilns

MMA 48.101.6a

58c Modern cast (glazed)



Smooth buffish clay. Part of a two-piece mold with vertical join, for making a ewer with pear-shaped body. The exterior (58a) has lugs that were used to fit the edges of the mold properly together. At the neck (58c) is a band of decoration consisting of circular medallions formed by interlooping lines. Within the medallions are birds in pairs, looking away from the center. Beneath this band, a deep band of knotted Kufic against a ground of foliations with exaggerated curling tips. Well proportioned, the lettering resembles, but is more elaborate than, Kufic seen in the polychrome on white ware of slightly later date (Group 4, 14). Knotting in Kufic lettering was also popular in Iranian architecture early in the eleventh century, for example, in the tomb of Radkan, of 1020/21 (S. Flury, *Islamische Schriftbänder-Amida-Diarbekr*, Basel, 1920, pl. xiv). In this example the filling of the background with small foliations is missing; it is present in the stonework at Amida, of 1155/56 (*ibid.*, pl. xiii). Thus far no vessels from Kashan with the elaborated Kufic of 58 have been found. Its place of manufacture must remain uncertain.

59a MOLD FRAGMENT

b Detail

W 10 cm ; East Kilns

MMA 48.101.8

Smooth reddish clay. Probably for the production of a large hexagonal bowl. Decoration: a row of human figures side by side, two of them opposed, wearing draped costumes and high boots. The areas left as background between the feet are filled with small foliations. Marks on the clay (59b) can be recognized as the grain of the wooden master model from which the mold was made. The folds in the drapery, made by curved lines graved across the grain of the wood, have characteristic jagged surfaces on one side. A related fragment, also from a polygonal mold, found in Nishapur after 1947 and now

in the Teheran museum, shows complete figures with similar costumes and boots.

57 and 59 suggest the range of quality in Nishapur's molded ware; 57 would have produced a piece with sophisticated and subtle design, 59 a crude, comparatively plain piece.

60 MOLD FRAGMENT

W 9.5 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 48.101.7

Gritty white body. Decoration: two poorly drawn human-headed birds, their bodies back to back, their heads facing. Their tails crossed, they stand on bent stems, surrounded by conventional foliate forms in a circular medallion. The beginning of another medallion adjoins it. For the identification of these birds as houris, see 41.

61 MOLD FRAGMENT

W 15 cm ; East Kilns
MIB



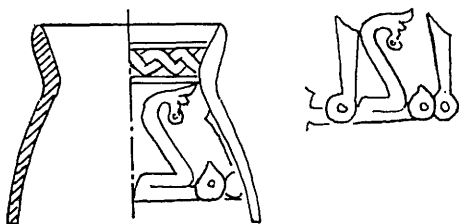
1:3

Gritty gray body. For decorating the entire top surface of a shallow dish with steeply sloping sides and a flat, projecting rim. The rim has repeated die-stampings of a heart shape. The side is fluted. The bottom is filled with an elaborate design of foliage and animals, including the front part of a horned animal and the hind leg and tail of a fox (?). Vessels of this shape were not made in Nishapur in the ninth and tenth centuries. Used in Nishapur in the twelfth century, the shape became popular elsewhere in the thirteenth. For its use in the pottery of Kashan decorated with underglaze painting, see Ettinghausen, *Ars Islamica*, III, p. 66, fig. 24; for its use in Kashan luster ware of the early thirteenth century, see Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 708. The discovery of 61 invalidates an earlier assumption that this shape was exclusively of Kashan.

62 MOLD FRAGMENT

H 7.4 cm ; East Kilns
MIB

Smooth reddish clay. Part of a two-piece mold for a small cup with everted lip. Decoration: a Kufic inscription on a ground of small palmettes. A fragment of another mold in which Kufic was the principal decoration had a two-strand braid on the neck:



1:3

63 MOLD FRAGMENT

W 9 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 48.101.32

Smooth reddish clay. Part of a two-piece mold with horizontal join for making the upper portion of a hexagonal dish with foot. Molds such as this (see also 59, 68) enabled the potter to get away from the circular shapes natural for wheel-thrown pieces. Decoration: round-bottomed panels side by side, one plain, one fluted, a dot in the space at the bottom of the flutes.

64 MOLD FRAGMENT

H 10.5 cm ; East Kilns
MIB

Smooth reddish clay. Part of a two-piece mold with vertical join for a cup or vase with everted lip. At the top, a band of Kufic against a ground of foliate patterns including palmettes. Beneath, a band of large palmettes. The lower portions are composed of highly elaborated leaves. The upper end of one terminates simply, as a normal palmette; the upper end of the other becomes an inverted trefoil from the top of which another trefoil grows upward. In the spaces between these large palmettes are small ones, pointing down. In the Teheran museum is a fragment of a related mold from the same location; this has an inscription at the top in foliated Kufic. The small, down-pointing palmettes in the lower band of 64 are similar to ones occurring in unglazed molded pottery found in the kilns of Merv (Pugachenkova, *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*, 2, 1958, p. 85, fig. 10, upper left), a center that does not seem to have produced alkaline-glazed molded pottery.

65 MOLD FRAGMENT

W 7.4 cm ; near East Kilns (surface find)
MIB

Reddish clay. Decoration: a Naskhi inscription against a foliate ground. In the center, amid the foliations, a small bird. The lettering resembles that seen on 57. Found at no great distance from the East Kilns, whence it probably came.

66 a,b,c MODEL FOR MOLD

D 15 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 48.101.9

Gritty white body. The fragments are incorporated in a modern body. The fact that there is no sign of a structural division, either vertically or horizontally, indicates that this is a model, not a piece cast in a mold. It also follows that this piece and others of a yet simpler nature (59, 63, 68) were locally made. The upper portion, which tapers sharply toward the rim, is decorated with clumsily drawn

lions in procession. Their bodies are adorned with conventional foliate forms; bands of short strokes have been added to the bodies and faces. Two of the lions are separated by a foliate form composed of three elements, the outer ones pear shaped, the center one projecting upward to form a point. Decorated with bands of short strokes, these elements rest upon two horizontal leaves that emerge from a common stem. The background is filled with leafy forms and a bird, all rather coarsely drawn. The lower portion of the piece is fluted, an indication that metalwork was the inspiration for the design.

67 MODEL FOR MOLD (fragment)

H 7.5 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 48.101.35

Gritty white body. Above a circumscribing band, palm-ettes end in extravagant curls within elaborate scrolling stems. As in 66 there is no trace of a join in either direction, confirming that this is part of a model, not a piece cast from a mold.

68 MOLD FRAGMENT

H 6.3 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 32.20.10

Smooth reddish clay. Upper part square, lower part hemispherical, pierced by a central hole. Probably for the production of glazed pieces shaped like Group 12, 159. The mold is decorated by direct incision with a pointed tool. Encircling the hole at the bottom is a line of Kufic inscription, the tops of the letters pointing down. Since the writing has been incised in the proper direction here, it would have produced mirror writing. The upper edge of the hemispherical portion is inscribed with a series of S-curves. The transitional space between the hemisphere and square is decorated with an open heart. Although little remains to indicate the decoration of the square portion, it would seem that each side would have produced a projecting form with a rounded bottom. This form and the adjacent panel are scratched with simple diaper patterns. The flat edge of the mold is pierced with a circular hole. Drops of greenish blue glaze on this piece suggest that after it was broken, the fragments were used in a kiln as supports.

69 POT FRAGMENT

D 14.7 cm ; East Kilns
MIB

Gritty yellowish clay. In the bottom, quartz pebbles stuck together with traces of bright blue copper-based glaze. Many similar vessels were found containing such pebbles, some bound with dark blue cobalt-based glaze, some with colorless glaze. No specimens were found with purple glaze, even though this glaze was used in Nishapur (4).

70 LUMP OF GLAZE

D 20.5, H 5 cm ; East Kilns
Portion in MMA 48.101.47

A portion of 70 is in the Teheran museum. Alkaline glaze with copper base; turned liver color with bright red streaks because of reduction in the kiln. The lump shows the shape of the vessel in which it was made.

71 STILT

W 10.2 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 48.101.22

Reddish core, gray surface. Used for stacking vessels within one another in a kiln. Such devices, their shape unchanged for millennia, are still used today. The three upturned tips, in contact with the vessel, leave bald spots in the glaze when the stilt is broken off after firing. Many Nishapur vessels of the Samanid period, thus marked on both bottom and base, show that they were nested during firing.

72 STILT

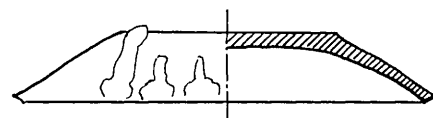
W 8.5, H 6.9 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 48.101.20

Red body, yellow surface. Used in kilns that produced alkaline-glazed ware. Blue glaze from the vessel it supported melted and ran down to form a pool between the points. The shape of the stilt seems to have been a common one in Nishapur.

73 SUPPORT

W 14 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 48.101.31

Buff core, yellowish surface. Of a type commonly used in the manufacture of alkaline-glazed ware. In the form of a shallow bowl made of coarse earthenware. A pat of clay added on top for stabilizing purposes. Streaks of light blue and dark blue glaze have run toward the "rim." Such a support was probably necessary to bridge the earthenware batons that were inserted in the wall of the kiln. It is not improbable that this object and others like it began as a sagger or a mold and was used in this fashion after breaking. The drawing is of a similar piece used in



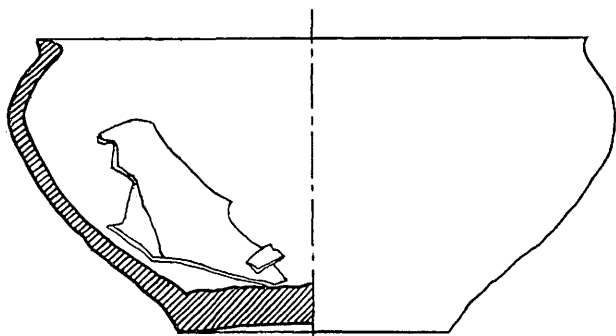
1:3

an inverted position as a support; the streaks of glaze are indicated.

74 FRAGMENT OF SAGGER AND BOWLS

W 13.5 cm ; Kilns near shrine of Muhammad Mahruq
MMA 40.170.689

Sagger: coarse greenish earthenware. Two bowls: white gritty body with light blue glaze over radial strokes of black. See 22. The drawing is of a sagger of entirely different shape, containing the remains of a turquoise blue vessel:



1:3

75 SAGGER OR MOLD FRAGMENT

East Kilns
MIB

Another portion of this piece is in the Teheran museum. Reddish core, buff surface. Flaring sides, inturning rim, flat base. The word *Allah* is roughly incised inside, presumably for good fortune in the kiln.

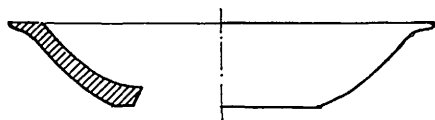
76 FRAGMENT OF SAGGER AND BOWL

W 8.5 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 48.101.30

Sagger: gritty greenish clay. Bowl: white composed body, manganese-based purple glaze. Bowl has collapsed on sagger so that it is like a skin.

77 MOLD FRAGMENT

W 3.5 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 48.101.33



1:3

Another fragment of this piece is in the Teheran museum. Gritty white composed body. For the production of shallow convex-sided bowls with everted rim. The aperture at the bottom was for the addition of a foot.

78 BOWL FRAGMENT

H 7, W 7 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 48.101.42

Another fragment of this bowl is in the Teheran museum. Hard white composed body, clear blue copper-based glaze. Lower part of vessel unglazed. Probably mold-made. Sides nearly vertical. Flat, everted rim. Decoration: flutes topped with an incised semicircle, an incised circumscribing line halfway down the wall.

79 PITCHER OR VASE FRAGMENT

W 8.2 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 48.101.40

Fine hard white composed body, clear bright blue glaze. Probably mold-made. Thin wall. The upper part of the vessel is decorated in relief with foliations growing from a narrow encircling stem, the lower part with a series of wide stripes in relief. The relief areas are painted black beneath the glaze. A related fragment in the Metropolitan (40.170.546) suggests that similar vessels were decorated with stripes alone.

80 BOWL FRAGMENT

W 17.5 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 48.101.16

Gritty white composed body, clear bright blue glaze. The shape, with widely flaring sides ending in an almost vertical rim, is similar to one used in the lead-glazed monochrome ware (Group 9, 33). The decoration, carved, consists of a broad band, bounded above and below by two closely placed lines, within which two broad vertical stripes alternate with a budding curling stem, ending in a flowerlike form. In Nishapur bowls of this shape were also made of coarse earthenware covered with an alkaline glaze.

81 PITCHER OR BOWL FRAGMENT

W 6.7 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.549

Fine hard white composed body. Mold-made. Thin wall. Colorless glaze, crackled, with dark blue (cobalt) splashes. Decoration: a Kufic inscription with a small foliate design in lesser relief forming the background. Beneath this, a braid of three double strands.

82 BOWL FRAGMENT

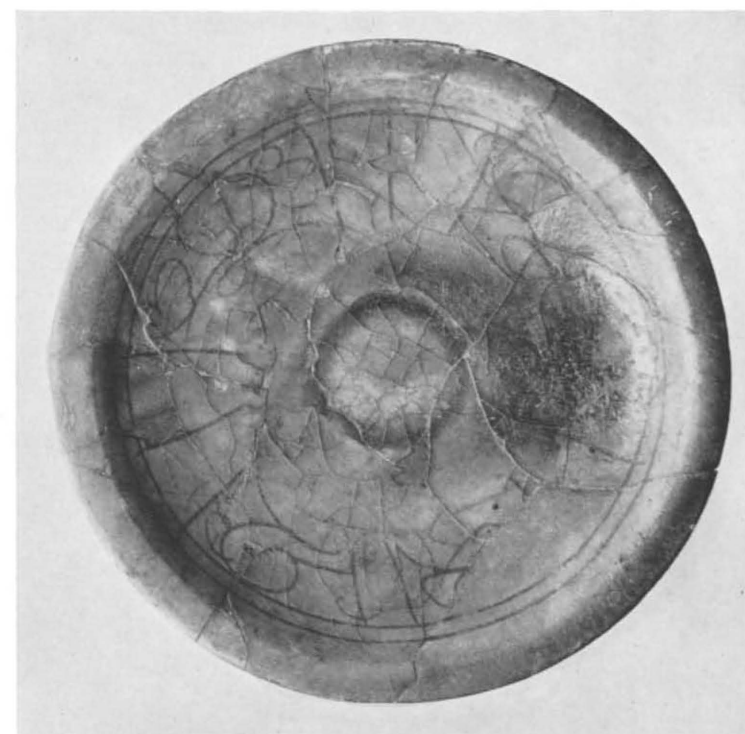
W 5 cm ; East Kilns
MMA 48.101.38

Another portion of this fragment is in the Teheran museum. White composed body, clear pale blue glaze, crackled. Mold-made. Very thin wall. Decoration: a diaper of hexagons, each of which has a small central boss surrounded by four pierced holes.

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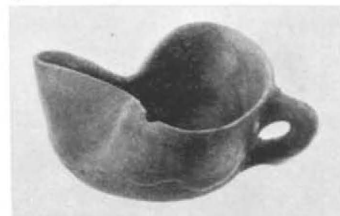
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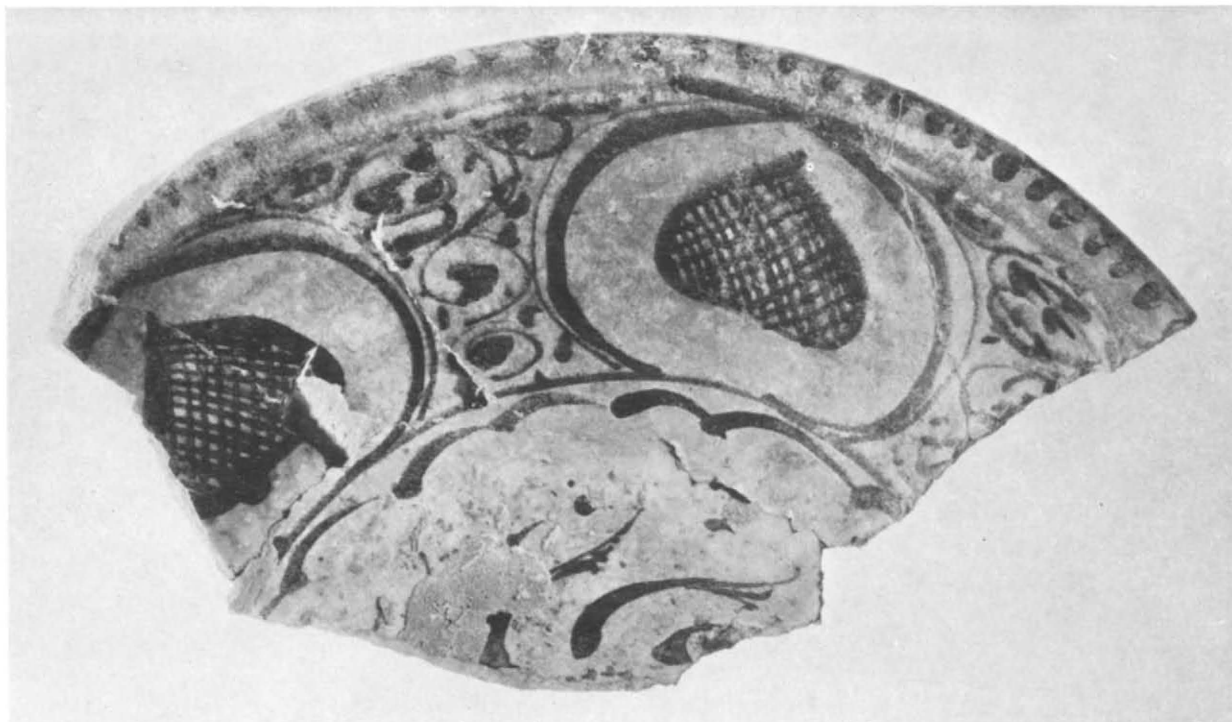
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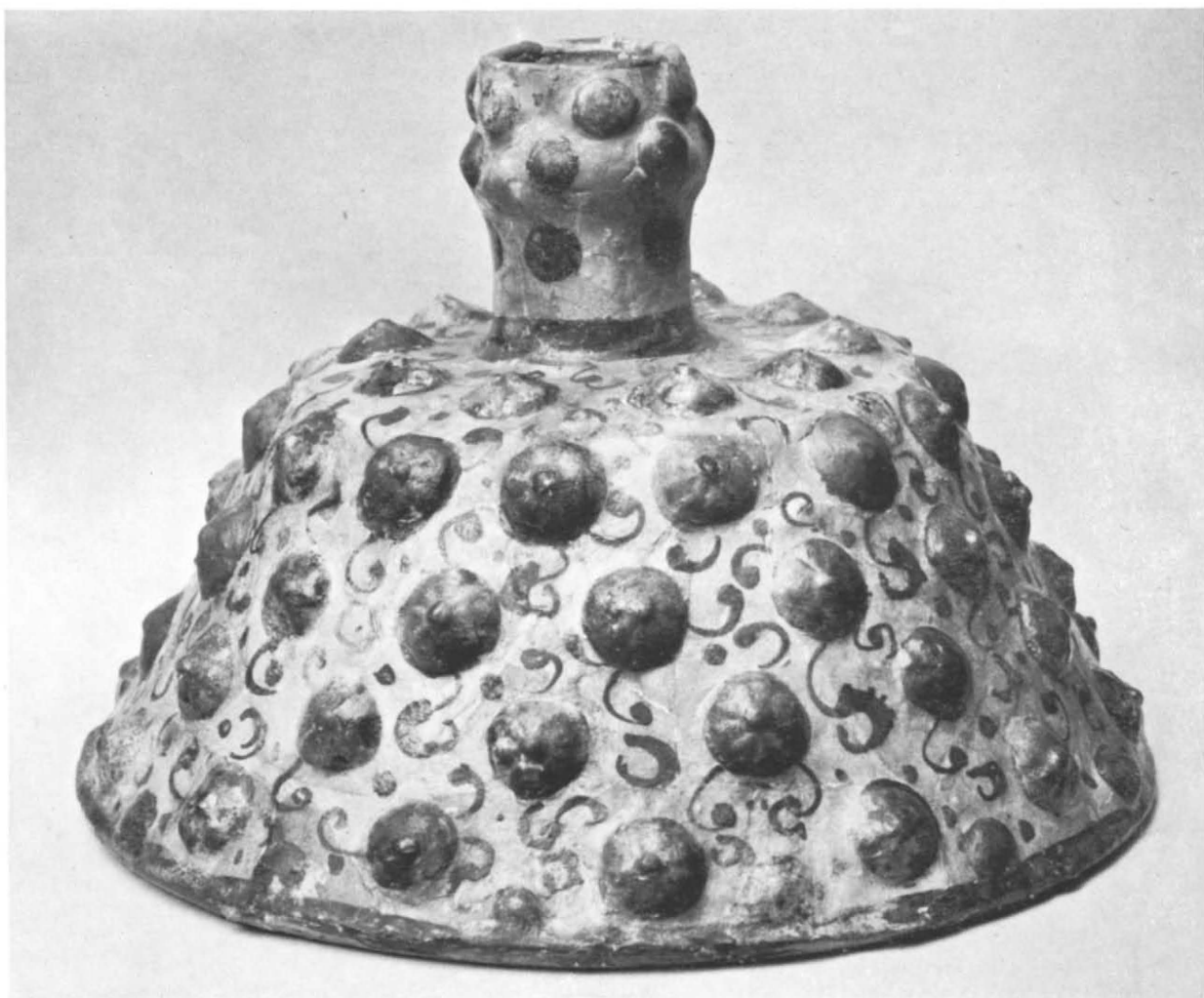
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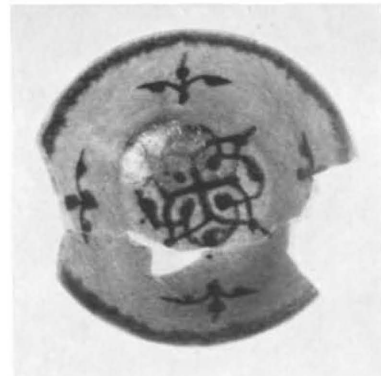


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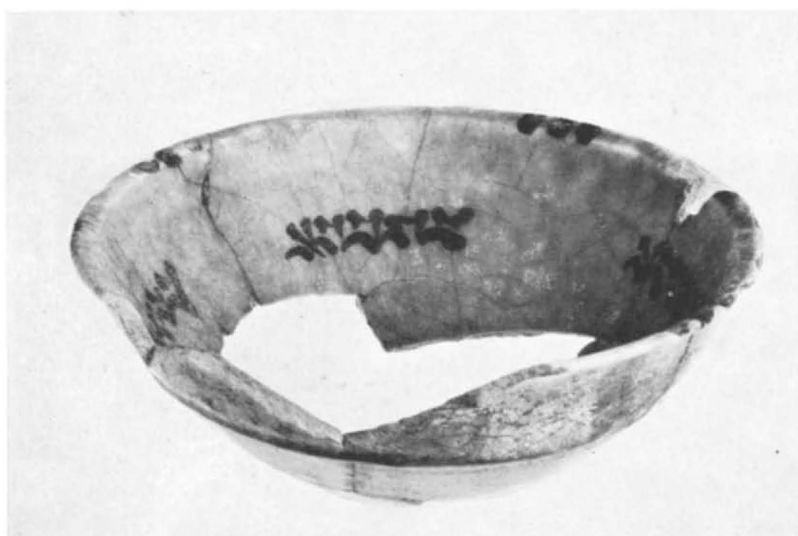
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18, 19



20a

21



20b



22

23



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25, 26



28, 29



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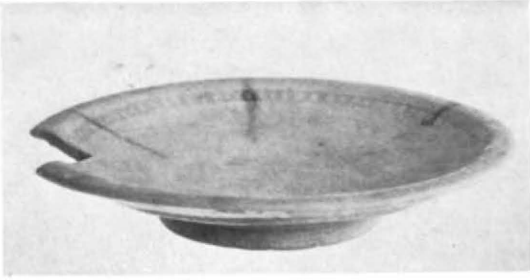
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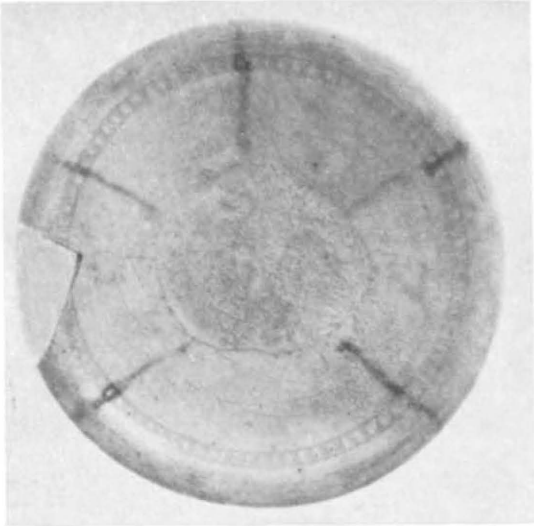
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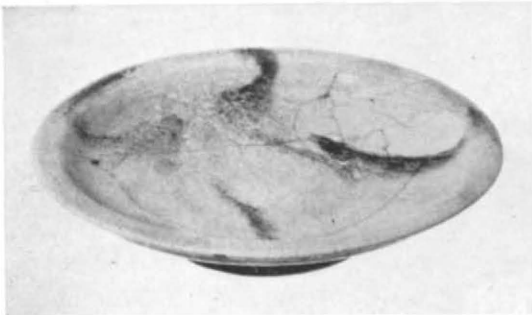
33a



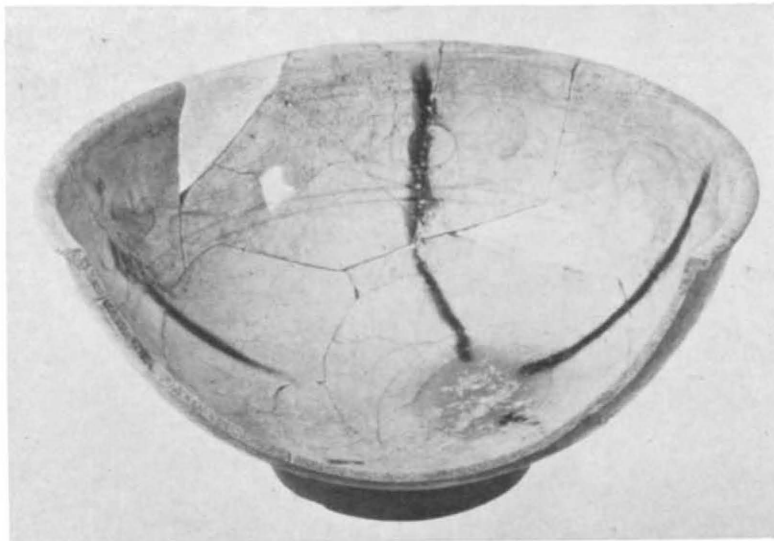
33b



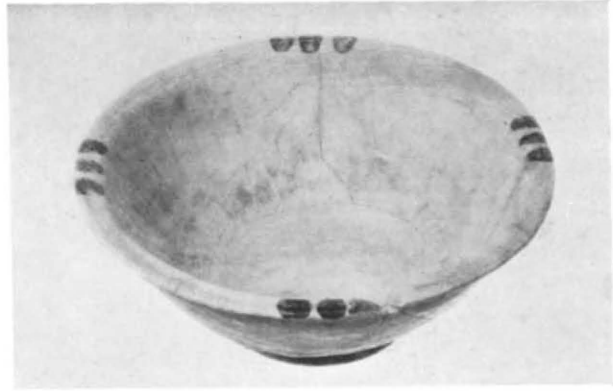
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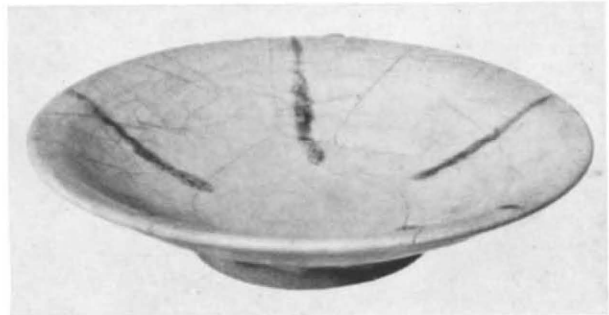
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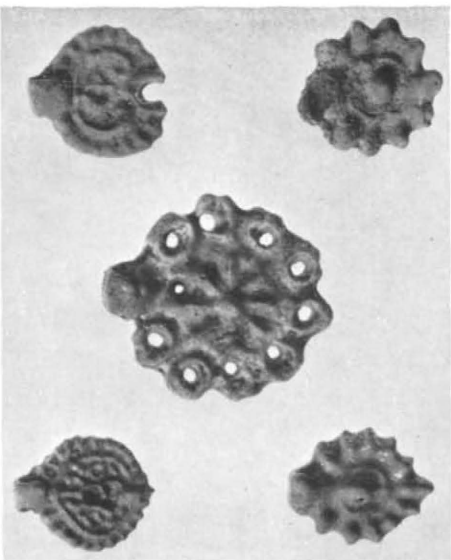
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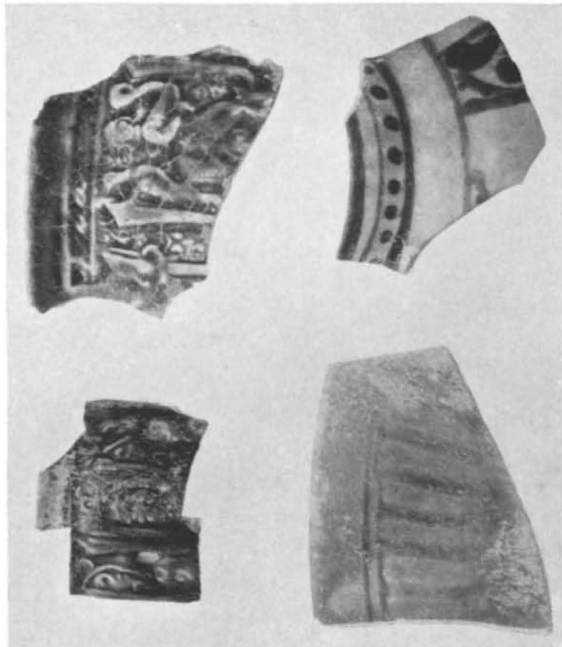
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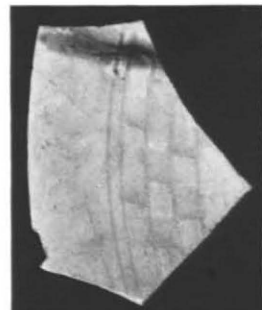
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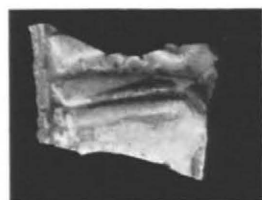
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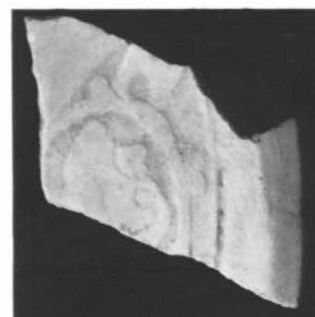
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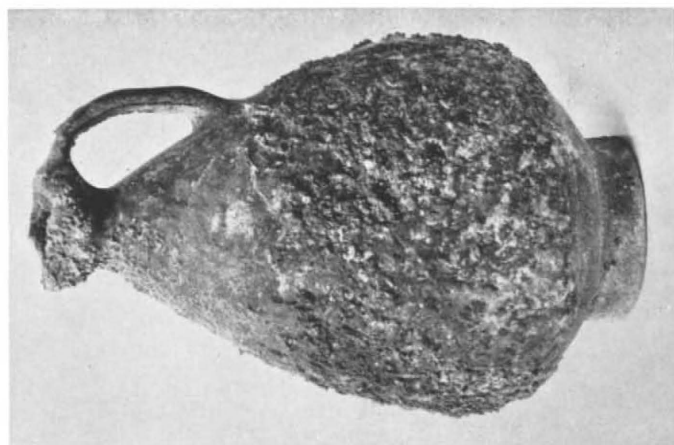
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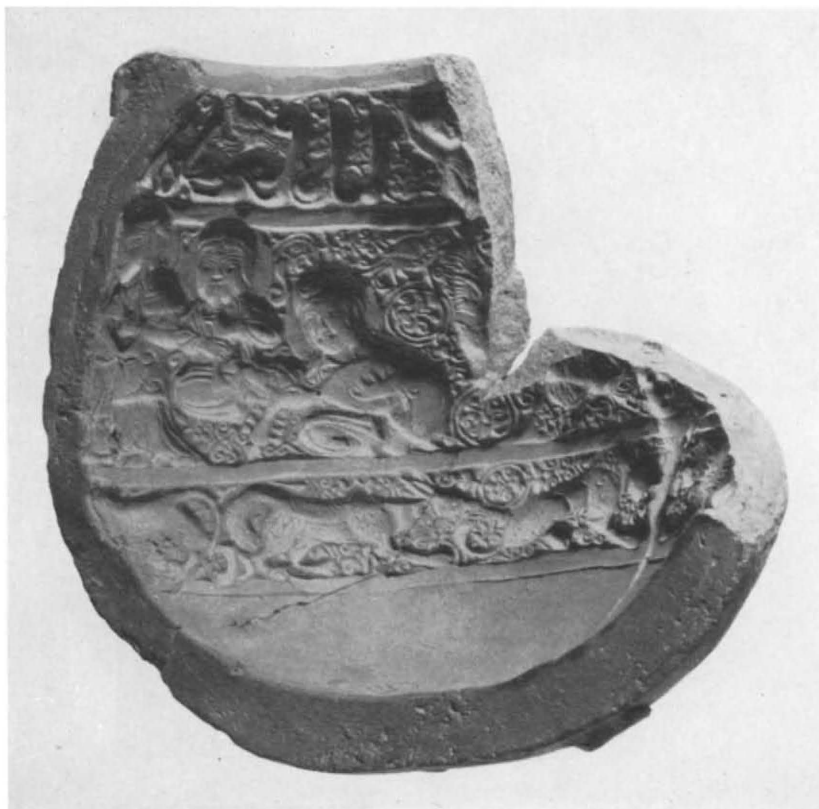


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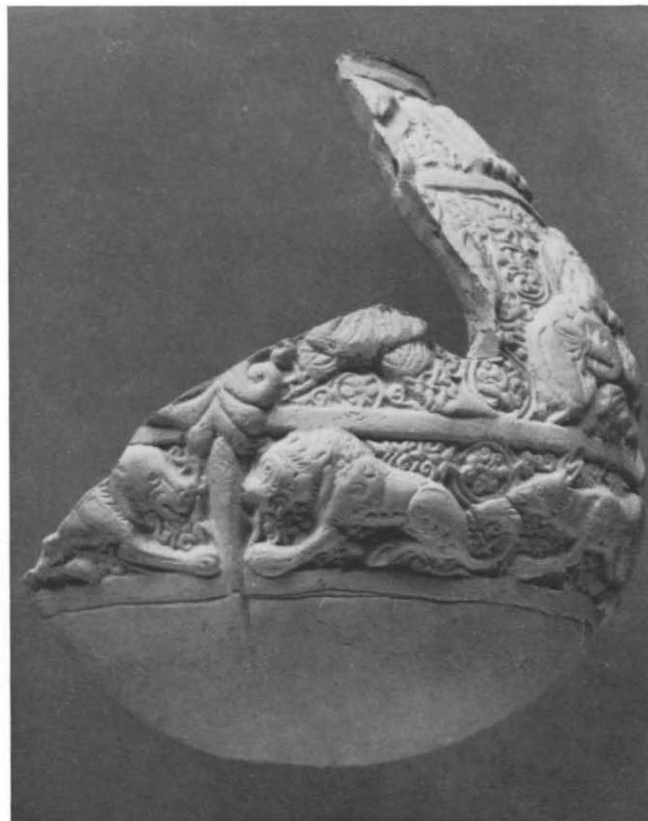
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57b



57c

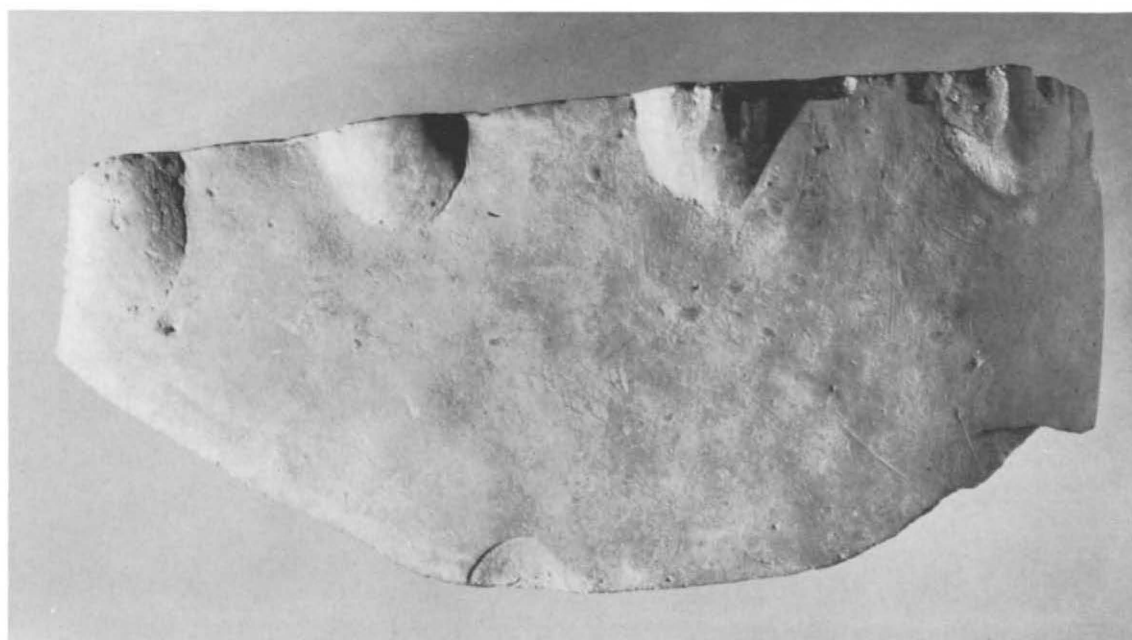




58c

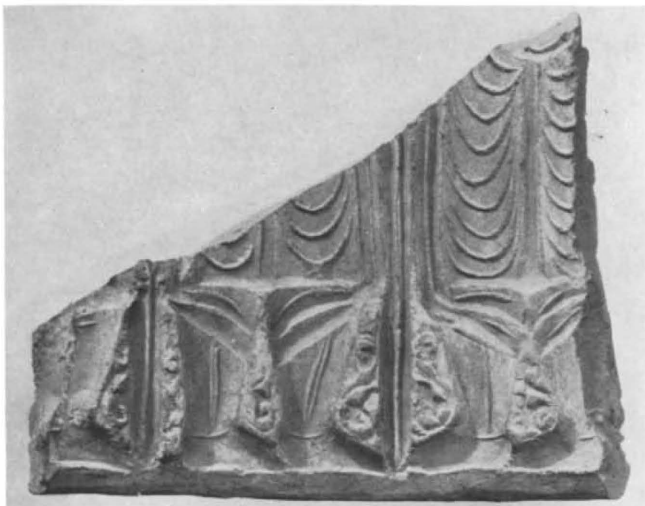


58b



58a

59a



59b



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66a



66b



66c



67



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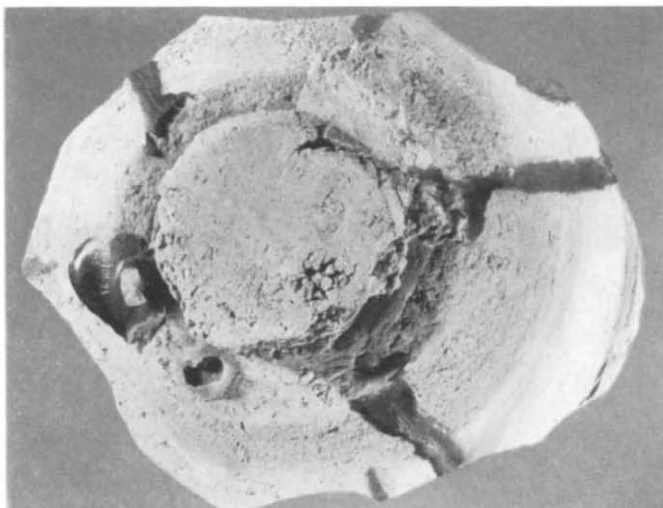
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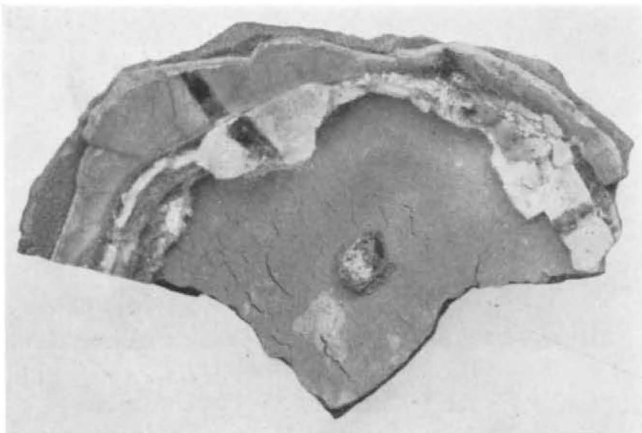
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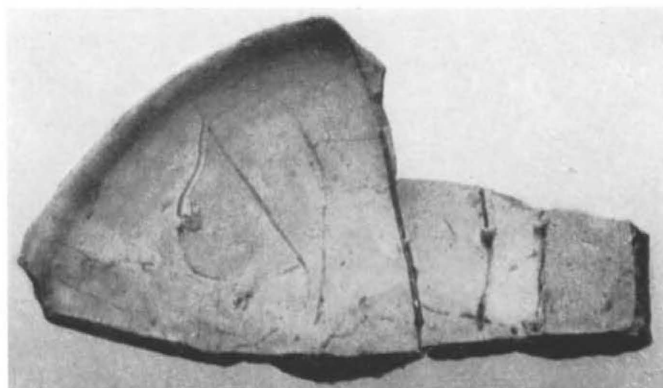
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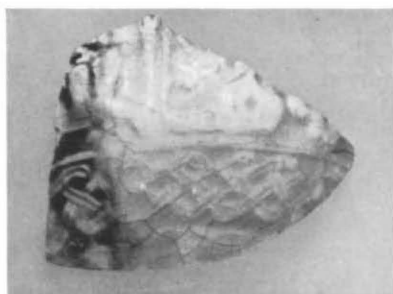
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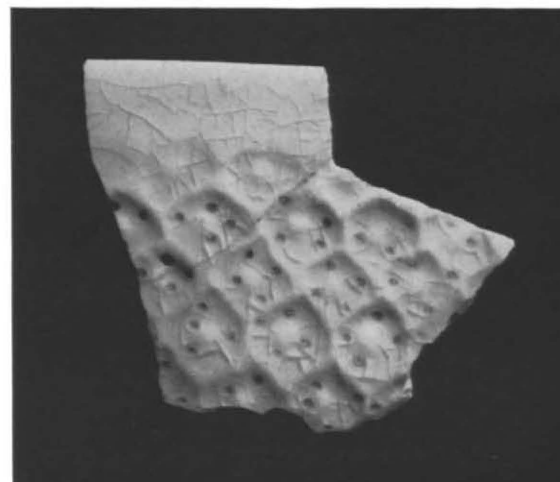
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81



82



12

Unglazed Ware

To many, the unglazed earthenware of the early Islamic period seems less important and less interesting than the glazed. This is perhaps to be expected, since it has not the variety of color and decoration that the glazed wares have. It is for the most part a humbler product, often intended for lowly purposes and generally not made by the most skillful potters. Even though the ware occasionally stirs an aesthetic response, its chief point of interest is probably its revelation of certain aspects of life that are neither described in early Islamic literature nor, in view of the almost total lack of contemporary painting, portrayed pictorially.

Unglazed pottery formed a large part of the total finds at Nishapur, but this should not suggest that the production made up for any deficiencies of the potters who made the glazed wares. The distinction between the two types in Nishapur is not merely an economic one, with the unglazed duplicating the glazed at lower cost and in poorer quality, true though this was on occasion. The chief difference is that of function. Unglazed earthenware was used, as to a lesser extent were metal and stone, for cooking vessels, but an even greater function for this ware was the storing of water, as opposed to other liquids. (The porosity of unglazed pottery makes it unsuitable, obviously, for the storing or serving of milk, wine, or oil.) The ware was of fundamental importance to Nishapur, for it was by its aid that potable water reached the city and was stored and consumed there. The larger forms used in the making of sinkaways and pits in dwellings and the qanats, or underground aqueducts leading from the mountains, are not dealt with in this study. The subject here is the ware in the form of storage jars, cooking vessels, large pitchers in which water was stored in every dwelling, and small pitchers from which it was drunk. The pitchers had the virtue in a hot, dry land of keeping water cool by evaporation—a virtue recognized in the Near East for millennia. Most of the small drinking vessels were provided with handles, doubtless because of the wetness of the body surface. These handles account for the fact that the tapered “tumbler” shape is rarely found in Iranian earthenware, even though it is quite common

in Iranian glass. Although such glasses were occasionally filled with water, they were used chiefly for the drinking of wine (Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, January, 1943, p. 183). In the unglazed ware practical aids sometimes became an excuse for decoration; for example, the thumbstops placed on the handles of drinking cups and small ewers. As was the case in Egypt (E. W. Lane, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, London, 1871, p. 187), it is possible that Nishapurians with well-appointed dwellings used unglazed pitchers during the warm months and glazed pitchers (which would not lower the temperature so much) during the cold months.

The unglazed ware was also made to serve a wide variety of other purposes in the form of lanterns, lamps, candlesticks, flowerpots, containers for coins, and toys. It was also used in the construction of fireplaces, both for the pot that contained the charcoal and the pipe that introduced the air (Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, June, 1944, pp. 285–286). In still another aspect, the ware was made into molds and dies for the production of pottery itself, unglazed as well as glazed.

All in all, one may get a broader insight into the life that was lived in Nishapur from its unglazed rather than from its glazed wares. Furthermore, once one looks beyond the utilitarian considerations, it will be seen that many of the unglazed vessels have considerable beauty of form. As in the glazed wares, there is a wide range in quality, some examples showing that the potter was skillful, others that he was careless. Some of the vessels are well proportioned and suggest at the same time the utmost practicability; others are ill shaped and could hardly have been adequate to their purpose. Generally speaking, the relationship of form and use is closer in this ware than in any of the others. For example, a beaker (35), although it has little interest for the eye, is made in a simple functional shape that has not changed for centuries. Yet even though many simple things like this beaker remain remarkably the same, as soon as decoration is added (and the people of Nishapur, like people everywhere, seemed to have wanted at least a little deco-

ration on most objects), there is usually some detail that enables us to identify the time and place of manufacture, even if only within broad limits. Unglazed ware has certainly been made in the Nishapur region from prehistoric times to the present day, but here we are concerned only with that made from the ninth century through the first two decades of the thirteenth. It is not possible to relate this ware to the unglazed ware of Sasanian Nishapur and to that made during the first century after its conquest by the Arabs. It is possible that a few of the excavated pieces were made a few years earlier or later than the limits just given, since neither styles nor habitations have a way of coinciding with the beginnings of centuries or decades. However, the excavations made it possible to arrange at least a broad sequence of shapes and styles over the four hundred or so years, and to reach some conclusions as to what was locally made and what was imported. Much of the study was based on the similarities and, conversely, the differences between the unglazed and glazed wares. With two exceptions, sites of the kilns that produced the unglazed ware were not found.

The ware varies greatly in color, depending in part on the clay itself, but also on technicalities of firing: degree of heat, amount of oxygen, smoke, and the like. Bricks and the large loops used in making the qanats are generally yellow. In the majority of the pieces presented here the core ranges from yellow to a strong red, the surface tending to be buff. The clay used for porous containers, especially thin-walled storage and drinking pitchers, is generally reddish or buffish with a greenish gray or greenish buff surface. Where porosity was not wanted, as in certain bottles (109–117), the ware was fired at a very high temperature, turning the clay dark green or even greenish black. Among the vessels and fragments found, a few were of a bluish gray clay. The rarity of such pieces means that they probably were imports. A similar bluish gray clay was found in the unglazed ware excavated by the Metropolitan at Qasr-i-abu Nasr.

Of the various means employed to make unglazed vessels attractive to the eye, the least common was painting. This was occasionally done in red and black (112), more often simply in black (55). A commoner treatment was chattering, achieved by letting a loosely held tool bounce off the leather-hard surface of a vessel as it turns on the wheel. In some Nishapur wares the chattering is unintentional, the result of unskilled potting. In the present ware, however, the chattered ridges and rills were regarded as an asset and, paradoxically, as the mark of a skilled potter. Chattering appears most often on the shoulder of pitchers (14, 22–24, among others) but may also occur lower on the body (5).

The commonest kinds of decoration involved scratching, pricking, stamping with a die, marking with a rou-

lette, and molding. The first three of these techniques were sometimes used individually for simple effects, but in many pieces they were combined. Pitchers of the ninth and the early tenth century were commonly given simple incised decorations on the collar. Some of these were made while the vessel was rotating on the wheel, either with a single point, sharp or blunt, or with a comb having two or more tines, which tool was used to produce a variety of wave effects (14, 21, 25, among others). Even the single point, used on a turning vessel, could produce lines of considerable variety; particularly popular was the wavy groove produced by a blunt point (12, 14). In the tenth century the patterns tended to be more elaborate on the neck as well as on the collar. Patterns made while the vessel was turning were often supplemented by graffiato decorations scratched when it was stationary. These include leafy forms and Kufic inscriptions. In productions of the twelfth century, the scratched patterns were more elaborate. Interwoven bands became popular. These sometimes appear on a pricked background (43), such pricking, as metalworkers were also aware, being a simple way to give "color" to an unpainted surface. Pricking was usually employed in conjunction with scratching; only on a few lids (47) does it account for nearly the entire decoration. The graffiato decorations made with a fine point appear in general on smaller pieces, those made with a blunt point on larger. The most elaborate example of decoration made with a blunt point occurs on some fragments of a storage jar (107, 108); here the incised patterns are combined with a die-stamped decoration.

Certain other techniques were employed only rarely. One such was the piercing of the clay wall. This might be done by a simple cutting or poking, as in certain lids (49, 51), or with finesse, as in a lid of better quality (50), or a lantern (52), the perforations of which had a practical purpose. Another comparatively uncommon treatment, fashionable in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, was dimpling; this was done on small vessels (25, 39) as well as large (64); the technique also occurs in the alkaline-glazed ware (Group 11, 14). A technique rarely encountered in Nishapur, although it was practiced in Iraq as early as the second millennium B.C., was that of affixing plaques, bearing molded or stamped designs, to the surface of vessels. Such plaques were found on only a few storage jars (105). The barbotine technique, in which a paste of clay is applied to a vessel to form its decoration in relief, does not seem to have been practiced in Nishapur in any major way, popular though it was in Iraq, especially in the twelfth century.

The use of molds in the making of unglazed vessels became common in Nishapur late in the eleventh century or in the twelfth and seems to have continued until the end of the period we are concerned with. Several molds

were discovered in the excavations. All of these seem to have been made in Nishapur. (For comment on the exportation of molds, see page 261.)

The mold technique enabled the potter to imitate the metalworker, who could produce raised patterns by hammering. The potter was also, by means of his molds, able to manufacture a large number of similar objects, no matter how lavishly decorated, with a minimum of effort. To carve an elaborate and well-drawn design on the concave surface of a mold would have been a formidable task, as is evident in a few crudely decorated pieces in which this seems to have been attempted (148). The potter avoided this difficulty by making earthenware dies, each one to produce a component of his design: a rosette (144), knot, palmette, animal, even a human figure. The typical designs, accordingly, combine repetitions of several different motifs, some of the combinations showing great ingenuity. When the potter wished to include an inscription among such stamped repetitions, he probably drew it directly on the wall of the mold (161, 162, 165). The principal method, stamping, differs from that used by the potters who made alkaline-glazed wares in molds. Those potters, although they too occasionally carved a mold directly, produced their molds from master models (Group 11, 66, 67).

The molds for the unglazed ware were usually hemispherical, consisting of a lower and an upper piece. The lower piece, ordinarily shallower than the upper, tended to be more simply decorated. The casts from these molds were joined by a bond of liquid clay. As a result of this joining the design is often damaged (162, 163, 166, among others), and at best there is an unattractive plain band (164). A similar indifference to the spoiling of the decoration at the join is found in the alkaline-glazed ware.

Dies were not only used for the making of molds; they were used to make impressions directly upon wheel-turned vessels (62, 116). This method of decoration was an ancient one, not invented in Nishapur. Stamping, together with linear pricked decorations apparently made with a roulette, was sometimes combined with treatments such as cutting (101).

Unlike the practice in Egypt (where a large percentage of unglazed drinking vessels was made in one place, Qeneh, because the clays were particularly suitable there), any town of size in Iran produced its own unglazed ware. But then Egypt as a country consisted essentially of the margins of the Nile, that great transportation artery. The quality of the ware in Iran would have had to be superior indeed for its diffusion to occur on a comparable scale. The luster ware produced in Kashan in the thirteenth century traveled widely; the unglazed pottery produced anywhere in Iran did not. Thus, the unglazed ware of

Nishapur is on the whole readily distinguishable from that of other centers. Some uncertainty can be attributed to the fact that unglazed drinking vessels and the like would have been carried by travelers, providing thus a degree of "importation." However, among the thousands of pieces and fragments of pieces that were found in the excavations, the imports were comparatively few.

Most of the pieces are pitchers or are pitcherlike. The many small one-handed vessels were probably intended as drinking vessels; they are here called drinking pitchers. The larger vessels, although they may have been used for drinking, were more truly for storage. Whatever their size and purpose, few such vessels were made with spouts. Pitchers and jars with small mouths were less common than those with large ones, even though the smaller opening would tend to admit fewer foreign bodies; such pitchers and jars were the containers from which the drinking pitchers would be filled. Some of them were provided with earthenware covers, either domed or concave and usually pierced. Entirely absent from the finds were the pierced clay diaphragms incorporated in the necks of Egyptian water jugs. This absence seems a little strange, inasmuch as such diaphragms were found at Merv, albeit with only simple perforations in place of the elaborate, often superb patterns of the Egyptian devices (Pugachenkova, *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*, 2, 1958, p. 82, fig. 6, left).

It may be helpful to summarize the developments of form in the Nishapur pitchers. The bodies of those of the ninth century are usually divided into two or three zones of different shape (3, 5, 6, 7). Such vessels, instead of having a distinctly defined base, have the bottom pushed up slightly, forming a depression that keeps the piece from wobbling on a flat surface. This ninth-century custom of pushing up the base, instead of its being thick and clearly indicated, appears to be peculiar to this time and to Nishapur itself. In several of the shapes there is a resemblance to eighth-century pieces from Khirbat al Mafjar and Ramla, as well as from Iraq. It might be said however, that the shapes are further developed in Nishapur than elsewhere and that the technique is superior. The decoration is of the simplest kind, consisting of chattering or some vertical or horizontal strokes made with a blunt tool. It is possible that the vertical strokes, even though they amount to little more than a burnishing, are a survival of the grooves that are so common in the Parthian pottery of Iraq (Debevoise, *Parthian Pottery*, pl. III, fig. 1). More likely they are a survival of the partial burnishing to be seen on Sasanian earthenware, as exemplified in the finds at Qasr-i-abu Nasr. Another feature of many pitchers of the ninth century is an almost spherical body with base often left flat (8). These pitchers usually have necks that are tall and wide in comparison

with the width of the vessel. A common detail in this type is a projecting collar at the base of the neck, single (12) or multiple (10). When not left plain, such collars are decorated with a bold wavy line or a group of parallel wavy lines. The bodies of the pitchers are sometimes chattered, sometimes rubbed in the horizontal direction. Pitchers with these round bodies were made both large and small, the former to serve as true pitchers, the latter (8, 11, 15) as drinking vessels. This type was occasionally glazed (Group 7, 15). Neither kind of pitcher so far described has a thumbknob on its handle. In Samarra in the ninth century the thumbknob was common; in Nishapur its use seems not to have begun until the tenth century.

During the tenth century the shape of the Nishapur pitchers gradually changed. The lower end tended to taper downward from a high shoulder, the neck was often very high, and the base, instead of being pushed up, was left flat. Usually there was a change of angle as the wall approached the base, leading to a recognizable foot. On both large and small pitchers the handle, as was not the case before, was generally furnished with a thumbknob. Apart from delicate chattering on the shoulder, the decoration of the new type of pitcher was mostly restricted to the neck, which rarely has the projecting collar of the older type. The commonest decoration is a band of combed lines low on the neck, serving as an ornamental collar. Sometimes this is all that one sees, but there is often a supplement of parallel lines circumscribing the neck higher up, either straight or wavy, and, more exceptionally, there are raised rings (18). The space between the lines may be filled with crosshatching, parallel wavy lines, lozenges, freely drawn patterns apparently derived from leafy forms, or Kufic inscriptions.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the wavy lines became the dominant motif. When such waves are deep they are often supplemented by little crescent-shaped scratches. One also finds slightly wavy incised lines, after the fashion of those on 43, radiating from the neck onto the shoulder. The neck itself is sometimes shorter in relation to the height of the body than it is in earlier pieces. A new form of decoration appears: dimpling (25). In heavy pitchers there is a tendency to have the area of greatest width below the center, giving the vessel a sagging appearance.

When mold-made pitchers became fashionable in the twelfth century, the shape changed again. The high shoulder disappeared and the greatest diameter occurred where the two hemispherical halves were joined. The neck, instead of being straight, now developed a curve (165), and the handles were once more made without thumbknobs. The bases of these pitchers became very high and were sometimes marked with circumscribing grooves.

The place in which a group of these mold-made pieces (155, 157, 158, 161, 162, 163, 165, 166) was found was identified as a kiln site. Although no other kiln sites were found for this ware, it is likely that it was not all made at one site, since another group of pieces with quite different decoration (167–177) was excavated in another area.

Water containers of a different shape from any so far discussed were found in Nishapur. They have a flatly domed top, a spout projecting at an angle, two handles close by the spout, and a substantial circular base. Two kinds of decoration were employed on these containers: graffiato patterns (103) of a simple type, seen on the earlier pieces, and a molded ornament (106), seen on pieces not earlier than the twelfth century. Such containers were not much used in Nishapur, judging by the paucity of the finds, and it is by no means certain that any of them were made there.

Not made until the eleventh or twelfth century were thin-walled drinking cups (41–43) that conform fairly closely to the cups in general use today. They carry an incised and combed decoration in the same style as the contemporary pitchers. Their absence in the earlier period substantiates the hypothesis that their function was then performed by the small pitchers.

Certain of the unglazed vessels (109–117) obviously constitute a special group. Usually of spherico-conical shape, they have a nipplelike opening at the top. In most cases this is circumscribed by a groove, probably to hold a suspension cord. Whatever the shape of the lower end—rounded, pointed, or given a fishlike tail—the small orifice at the top precludes spilling when the vessel is set down. The vessels have other features in common; all can readily be held in one hand. All are of high-fired, hard, impermeable clay, capable of retaining a liquid for a long time, even if left unsealed. These are Nishapur's representatives of a type of vessel that has been widely and numerous found in the Islamic world. That our examples were made in Nishapur is evident from the discovery of many pieces spoiled in the making. The kiln site itself, which is at a high level and was probably active in the twelfth century, extends under a modern road at the edge of Qanat Tepe and could not be excavated. None of the many similar vessels discovered was glazed, and only one was made of a substance other than earthenware: stone. Like a number of the earthenware vessels, this had an incised decoration.

The wide-ranging hypotheses concerning this type of container have been usefully assembled and recapitulated by Richard Ettinghausen (*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, XXIV, pp. 218–229). Nothing that we discovered in Nishapur supports the speculation by some earlier writers that they were filled with combustibles for use either as lamps or grenades, and the construction of

Nishapur fireplaces (Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, June, 1944, pp. 282–291) rules out their conjectured use as aeolipiles or fire-blowers. In our view (those of us who excavated them in Nishapur) these were simply bottles for storing valued liquids—of which rose water, to suggest but one, would be common. The bottles probably served as aquamaniles, or dispensers, in the required cleansing of hands before and after the taking of food. It is to be noted in this connection that the *gum-qum* bottle, with its long neck and small orifice, came into fashion at a later time. A group of ninth-century bottles of this type from Oren-Kala (Azerbaijan?) (Giuzalian, *Palestinian Collection*, 13, 1965, pp. 166–170, figs. 1, 2) contained some with the inscription “drink with pleasure,” suggesting that they were intended for potable liquids. The heaviness of most of these spheroidal vessels, however, does suggest a more extensive use than this. The subject has been revived recently by J. M. Rogers in his article “Aeolipiles Again,” in *Forschungen zur Kunst asiens*, Istanbul, 1970, pp. 147–158.

Some flat molds — none complete — made of very smooth, well-cleaned clay, present a number of problems. While some are decorated simply in a geometrical fashion, others are of great iconographical interest, incorporating human and perhaps semidivine creatures. Though a broken inscription in Arabic on one of the models (190) indicates that it is of Muhammadan inspiration, certain of its decorative details are decidedly unorthodox. What substance was fashioned in these molds is not known. It seems doubtful that they were used for the manufacture of ceramics, since the entire group was found at a site far removed, so far as we know, from any kilns; furthermore, no other debris associable with kiln sites was found in the vicinity. Possibly they were used for making thin gold ornaments. No matter what the medium, it is difficult to conceive the use or uses of the molded objects. No loops for suspension are indicated, in contrast, for example, with such loops on the blue-glazed pendants (Group 11, 44–48). If the objects were of metal, they could have been attached to fabrics by means of perforations or added wire loops, but this is all speculation. The dating of these pieces can only be approximated. Mixed with other debris, they were used in the filling of a low plastered platform that was added on top of the original plastered floor of a room furnished with a plaster mihrab. It is only certain that they cannot be assigned a date earlier than the end of the tenth century.

With the principal kinds of unglazed ware in Nishapur established, a few words may be added about its relationships with the unglazed ware of other places. That of the seventh- and eighth-century city of Merv, two hundred miles north of Nishapur, as published by E. Z.

Zaurova (*Trudy*, XI, pp. 174–216), shows a few resemblances only, such as the use—to a very limited extent—of wavy combed lines (figs. 19, 22) and kinship in a fragment or two of molded ware (p. 210, fig. 26). At a slightly later period and at places to the west of Nishapur there are examples that recall, but are easily distinguishable from, those of Nishapur. These occur at Fustat (Scanlon, *Archaeology*, 21, p. 191), Khirbat al Mafjar (Baramki, *Quarterly of the Dept. of Antiquities in Palestine*, X, pl. XXI), Al-Hira (Rice, *Ars Islamica*, I, pp. 51–73), Ctesiphon (unpublished), al-Mina (Lane, *Archaeologia*, LXXXVII, pl. XIX), Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. II), and Susa (Koechlin, *Les Céramiques*, pl. I). The same statement holds for unglazed pottery produced at still later periods at Merv (Zaurova, *Trudy*, XI, p. 196), Lashkari Bazar (Gardin, *Lashkari Bazar*, II, pl. IV), and Rayy (unpublished). A large number of these pieces have a basic conformity because, on the whole, they were made to serve similar functions. It would not be sensible to suggest that any one place influenced the work of another. Certain preferences were more or less universal, such as the thumbstop on the handle, the combed decoration (common throughout the ninth and tenth centuries), and dimpling (widespread in the eleventh and twelfth centuries). Some details are the mark of Nishapur potters, none other, for example, using chattering as a decorative device more skillfully. Another mark of manufacture in Nishapur was the custom, in the ninth century, of pressing up the base of small drinking vessels and ewers. If the Nishapur maker of unglazed pottery borrowed some shapes from Iraq of the ninth century, he quickly refined them so that what he produced excelled that which he copied—a process not to be observed in the glazed wares of Nishapur. In some types of the present ware, such as the spheroidal vessels, he was undoubtedly influenced. On the whole he was less original in these than were the potters of Transoxiana. In regard to the molded wares, little was imported to Nishapur beyond a few pieces from Merv. Despite much excellent work in this technique, the Nishapur style broadly conformed to that of other major centers.

On the whole, the Nishapur potters who made unglazed wares were not greatly influenced by the production of other centers, even though their wares reflected certain current ceramic fashions and used decorative features unknown in pottery before the early eleventh century, such as seated human figures, human-headed birds, and star-dotted backgrounds. One is less conscious, in the unglazed pottery, of the division between east and west, perhaps because, in the greater part of this ware, ornament played a lesser role than in the glazed wares.

1 DRINKING PITCHER

H 12.3, W 9.8 cm ; Tepe Madrasedh
MIB

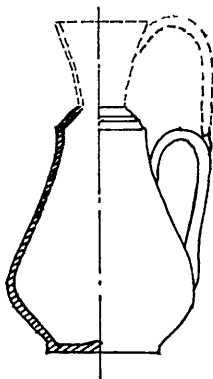
Well-cleaned bluish gray clay. Flaring neck. Body widest below midpoint. Base thin and flat. Plain looped handle attached at lip and just above widest part of body. Both color and shape are unusual, suggesting an import. The locations in Nishapur in which bluish gray pottery was found indicate that it is of the ninth century. Pitchers of this clay rarely have a thumbknob on the handle. These pitchers, as well as those of the usual greenish gray color, were finished wetly; they do not have an engobe. Unglazed pieces of this bluish gray color have also been found at Qasr-i-abu Nasr.

2 DRINKING PITCHER

H 13, W 9.6 cm ; Tepe Madrasedh
MIB

Surface light blue with greenish cast. Discolorations due to burial. Thinly potted. Neck flares from sloping shoulder; a groove at the collar. Body almost pear shaped, with sharp change of angle just above base. Base pushed up to form a concavity, a treatment much used in Nishapur in the ninth century as an alternative to a solid foot or a foot ring. Plain looped handle. Vertical tool strokes on body.

Several variations of this shape were found, one having no clearly defined change of angle above the base, others having two or three grooves at the collar. One such pitcher, of which only fragments were found, had two handles, one



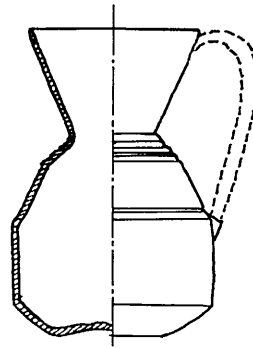
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surmounting the other. The upper end of the lower handle was attached below the pitcher's neck lower than it is attached on 2. Above this, on the neck, the upper end of the additional handle was attached; its lower end joined the first handle at the point where the first handle was farthest from the body of the pitcher.

3 DRINKING PITCHER

H 12.4, W 9.5 cm ; Tepe Madrasedh
MMA 40.170.198

Bluish gray clay, thinly potted. Plain neck flares sharply



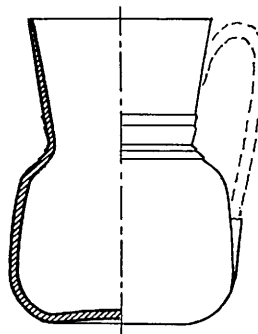
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from sloping shoulder, which is decorated with circum-scribing grooves forming four short steps. Body divided into two zones of different shape, the upper with sloped sides, the lower with vertical sides. The upper zone is intentionally chattered. The plain looped handle attaches to the top of the lower zone, the common practice in thinly turned pitchers with bodies thus divided (compare 5-7). The base is pushed up to form a concavity.

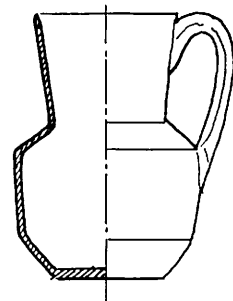
Pitchers similar to 3, but with the neck taller and more vertical, were made in the ninth century in Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, pl. II, no. 3) and Ctesiphon (unpublished). The potting of these pitchers, which are of a yellowish clay, is inferior to that of Nishapur, and the pieces lack the distinctive concave bases of the Nishapur pieces. The vertical strokes on the bodies are scratched, not chattered. In Susa the pitchers most closely related to 3 (Koechlin, *Les Céramiques*, p. 10, nos. 75, 78) resemble those found in Samarra and Ctesiphon rather than Nishapur; the pottery of Susa in general is more closely related to that of Iraq than that of the Iranian highland.

4 DRINKING PITCHER (handle missing)

H 12.5, W 9.2 cm ; Village Tepe
Discarded

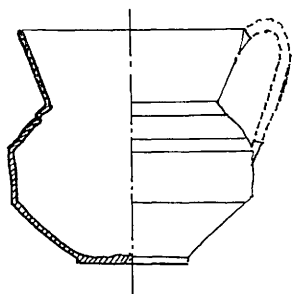


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1:3

Bluish gray clay, thinly potted. Flaring neck. Broad pear-shaped body with sharp change of angle near the pushed-up, concave base. Two incised lines encircle the neck, two the shoulder. Ninth century. Somewhat similar pieces were found at low levels in Tepe Madrasedh. Some of these had a more or less vertical wall at the center of the body.

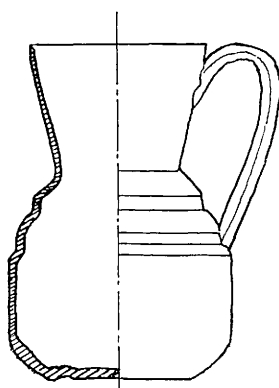


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Another example from Tepe Madraseh is so low in proportion to its width that it must be considered a cup rather than a drinking pitcher.

5 DRINKING PITCHER

H 14.7, W 10.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.47

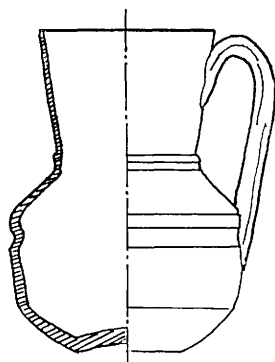


1:3

Greenish surface. Thinly potted. Flaring neck. Body divided into three zones by means of short vertical steps. The lowest zone, which has vertical sides, is chattered. The base has a circular groove, leaving a central platform four centimeters in diameter. The lower end of the handle attaches to the lowest zone of the body (compare 3, 6, 7). Ninth century.

6 DRINKING PITCHER

H 14.6, W 11.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

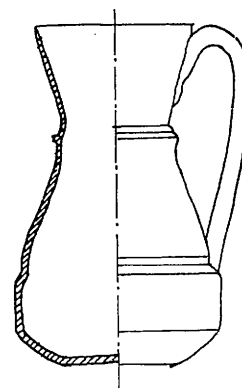


1:3

Warm gray clay, unusually gritty. Body divided into two zones by means of a deep groove. The lower zone, with almost vertical sides, has a sharp change of angle as it leads to the pushed-up, concave base. The round-shouldered upper zone has tool marks on it. Two adjoining ridges encircle the collar. The flaring neck and loop handles are characteristic of pitchers with more globular bodies (8, 15). Found in the same location as 5. Ninth century.

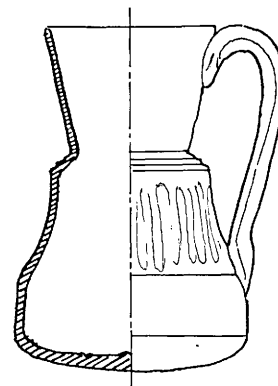
7 DRINKING PITCHER (minor restoration)

H 14.5, W 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.44



1:3

Greenish gray surface. Thinly potted. Body divided into two zones by means of a groove. The sloping upper zone has been worked by a tool with an up and down movement. The vertical-sided lower zone has a sharp change of angle as it leads to the base. Base is pushed up to form a cavity four and one-half centimeters in diameter. Around the collar of the flaring neck are two adjoining ridges, a feature of several ninth-century drinking pitchers (6, 15). The lower end of the handle attaches at the usual point, the top of the lower zone. Related pitchers were found with a more strongly concave upper zone, tooled in up and down zigzags. Another example from Tepe Madraseh,



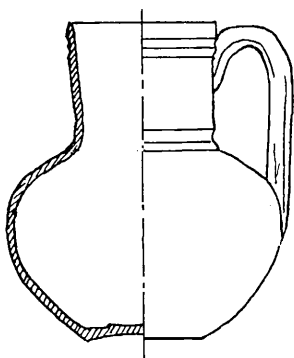
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roughly similar in shape, had a convex, rather than concave, base.

8 DRINKING PITCHER

H 12.2, W 11.6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Greenish buff surface. More heavily potted than 1-7. Globular body has distinct transition from sloping shoulder to slightly flaring neck. Neck is wider, proportionately, than necks of 2-7. Body shows slight horizontal tool marks. Such marks, made when the vessel is on the wheel but not revolving at speed, are characteristic of this heavier kind of pitcher. Flat, thin base. Such a base is also characteristic, as is the absence of a thumbknob on the loop handle. Ninth century. We know from other examples from Tepe Madraseh that in some instances the collar is well devel-

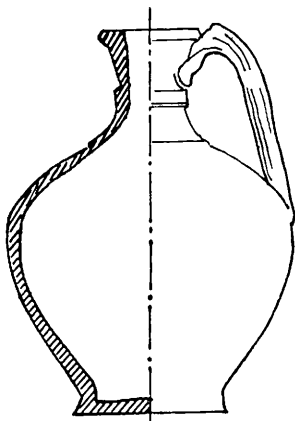


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oped. In addition to the collar a grooved decoration sometimes appears near the lip.

9 PITCHER

H 16, W 11.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB



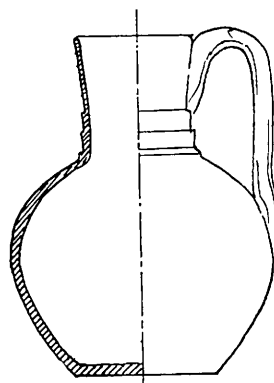
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Body plain with wide, gently sloping shoulder. Handle plain. Small, slightly flaring neck with rounded rim. At the collar, a step with ridge above and below. Flat, thickened base. Found in a low-level, ninth-century location. Small-necked pitchers of this shape were sometimes provided with a hemispherical cover (46).

10 PITCHER

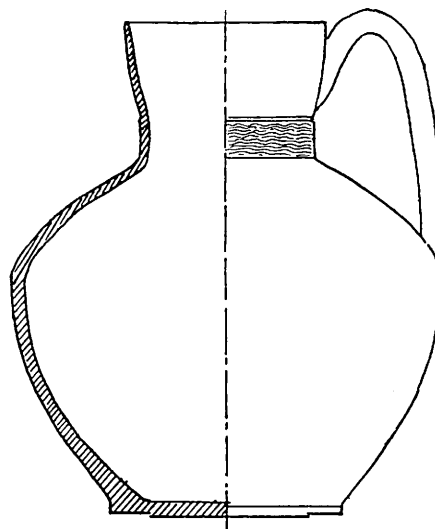
H 16.7, W 14 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Thinly turned, globular, flattish-shouldered body, decorated with chattering. Small neck with two shallow steps at collar, common on ninth-century pitchers. Several somewhat similar pitchers were unearthed. One in the Metro-



1:3

politan (40.170.40) has a taller neck, slightly narrower shoulders, and is not chattered. Another, also in the Metropolitan (40.170.42), has a single incised line around the



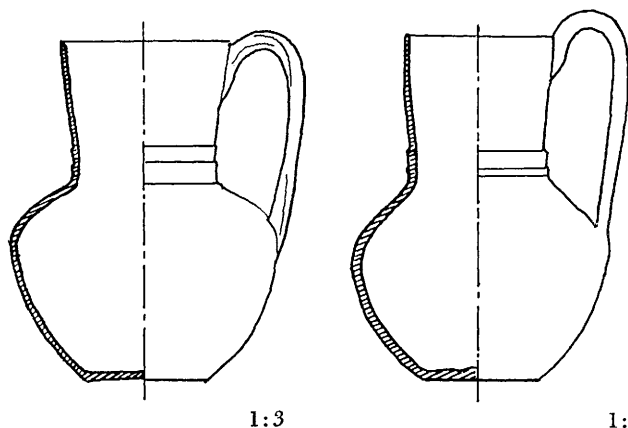
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collar and combed rather than chattered decoration. Another type, with boldly stepped neck and almost spherical body, was retrieved from Tepe Madraseh.

11 DRINKING PITCHER

H 13.4, W 11.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Buff surface. Rather small body with wide neck. Two-stepped collar. The shapes and collar, common on ninth-



century pitchers, vary in shape, size, and number of steps. No ninth-century pitchers of this shape have a thumbknob on the handle.

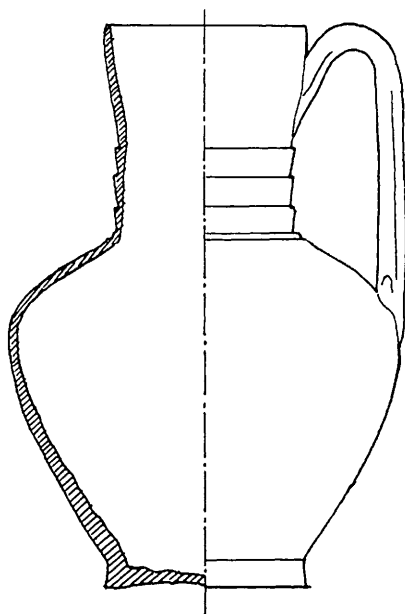
12 PITCHER

H 23.9, W 18.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.207

Buff core, yellowish gray surface. The nearly spherical body is chattered at about the level of the bottom of the handle (compare 14). The potter then all but obliterated the ridges with toolings made when the vessel was on the wheel but not turning at speed (compare 15). The base is pushed up to form a slight concavity. At the base of the tall neck is a projecting collar decorated with a wavy groove. Ninth century. Found with 14. Other pitchers of this shape were found, their bodies chattered, their necks left plain.

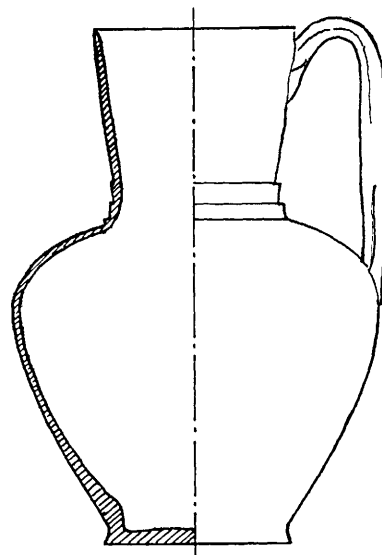
13 PITCHER

H 24, W 15.7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB



1:3

Reddish core, greenish buff surface. Narrow neck with three-stepped collar. Stepped collars are also found on pitchers with comparatively wide necks (11, 14). The pronounced base, breaking the line of the lower body, is characteristic of vessels with narrow mouths. Ninth century. These pitchers vary somewhat in proportionate heights of neck and body, as in one with a two-stepped collar from Tepe Madraseh:



1:3

14 PITCHER

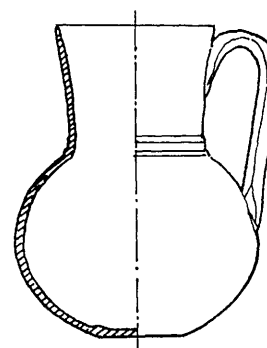
H 25.1, W 19.3 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.208

Greenish gray surface. Almost spherical body, chattered. Very thin, slightly concave base. On neck, a two-stepped projecting collar decorated with a combed wavy pattern. Near the lip, a band consisting of two incised lines and a wavy line. Ninth century. Found in the same pit as 12, along with several other pitchers. Pitchers of this shape were sometimes glazed (Group 7, 15, 16).

15 DRINKING PITCHER

H 13.7, W 10.9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.190

Greenish gray surface. Almost spherical body with tooled finishing marks. Base pushed up to form a concavity. Two adjoining ridges of equal size encircle the base of the tall neck (compare 6). Ninth century. Very similar vessels were made with a flat base and with the rings on the neck separated, as in another example from Tepe Madraseh:



1:3

16 PITCHER

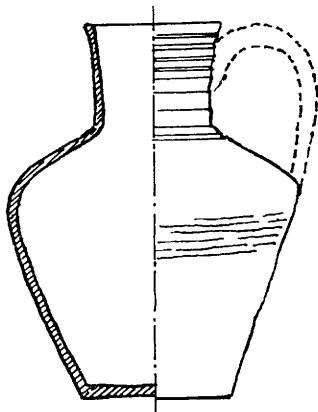
H 19.5, W 13 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 39.40.21

Greenish gray surface. Turned thin. An unusual shape, the wide-shouldered body tapering to a wide, flat base, the narrow neck opening into a wide cuplike mouth. Two incised lines encircle the neck. Despite the uncommon shape, the quality of the potting and the appearance of the clay suggest local manufacture. Ninth or tenth century.

17 PITCHER

H 18.5, W 12.9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Pinkish buff body, greenish gray surface. Walls turned thinner than the projection of the lip may suggest. A groove encircles the neck just below the lip. Below the upper attachment of the handle, a band formed of two pairs of grooves enclosing a wavy line. On the shoulder, close against the neck (not visible in the illustration, but see 20), is a band of hatched strokes, placed close together and set at an angle. These were made with a comblike tool. Faint chattering present on body. At the shoulder, a dark reddish blush, caused by the pitcher's close juxtaposition to another vessel in the kiln. Tenth century. Vessels with this profile were not always as elaborately decorated nor did they always have such finely turned walls, for example, one from the same site but probably of earlier date:



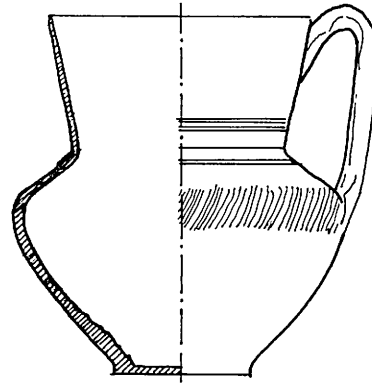
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18 DRINKING PITCHER (handle missing)

H 13.2, W 11.3 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Greenish surface. Turned thin. Flaring neck. Low shoulder. Body tapers sharply to small, flat base. Handle probably surmounted by thumbknob. A shape that in Nishapur appears to be characteristic of tenth-century drinking pitchers. It must be noted, however, that this particular form existed in the eighth century in Egypt, though with a more coarsely formed base, as in an example found at Fustat along with two dated glass objects, one a measuring

vessel, the other a coin weight (Scanlon, *Archaeology*, 21, p. 191). The body of 18 is chattered on the curve of the shoulder. Between the bands on the neck, which are decorated with wavy lines and bordered by projecting ridges, a scratched Kufic inscription reads: *al barakeh (li) sahibeh* (blessing to the owner). Some of these thin-walled vessels lack inscriptions and combed decorations; in these, chattering appears to be the principal decoration:

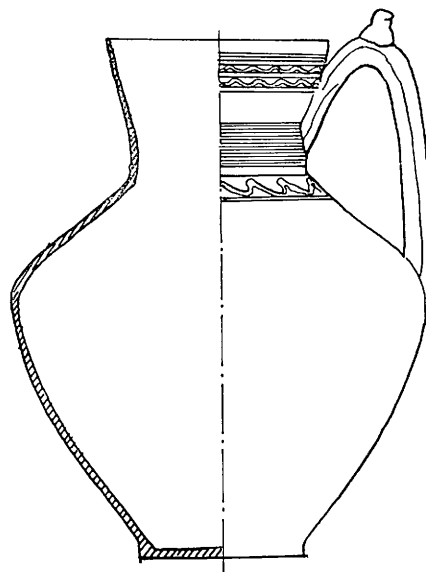


1:3

19 PITCHER

H 23.2, W 16.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Reddish buff core, yellowish green surface. Potted thicker than 17, 18. The moderately wide, flaring neck, which has a slightly projecting lip, is encircled with bands of straight and wavy combed lines. Pitchers of this heavier make, with high shoulders and steeply tapering sides, were manufactured in great number in Nishapur during the tenth century and a little later. Their handles are usually furnished with a thumbknob, as seen here. For a toy version, see 134. Although some of these pitchers had moderately wide necks (19) with a flat rim, others had the thin rim typical of Nishapur unglazed pitchers and drinking vessels, as in an example from Tepe Madraseh:



1:3

20 DRINKING PITCHER

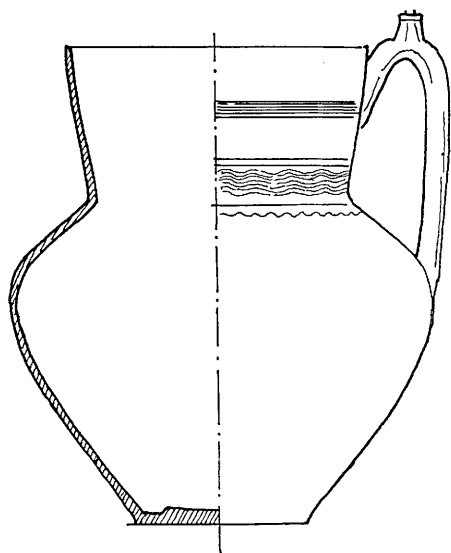
H 22.4, W 19.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Greenish gray surface. Body tapers down to a clearly indicated base. Lip very thin. Around the wide neck, at level of handle attachment, two narrow bands of incised lines. The collar, decorated with combed waves, does not project, unlike the collars of earlier pitchers (12, 14). On the shoulder, close to the neck (as on 17), a band of short hatchings. Typical of tenth century.

21 DRINKING PITCHER

H 21.6, W 18 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.187

Greenish gray surface. Body merges inconspicuously into base. Base, pushed up in center, has a slight bevel. Collar, projecting slightly, has combed decoration; at level of handle attachment, two incising wavy grooves. Handle has a thumbknob composed of two elements. Apparently a transitional piece between such ninth-century pitchers as 12 and 14 and 20, which is of the tenth century. A very similar pitcher without the projecting collar came from Tepe Madraseh:



1:3

22 DRINKING PITCHER

H 18.4, W 16 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 36.20.39

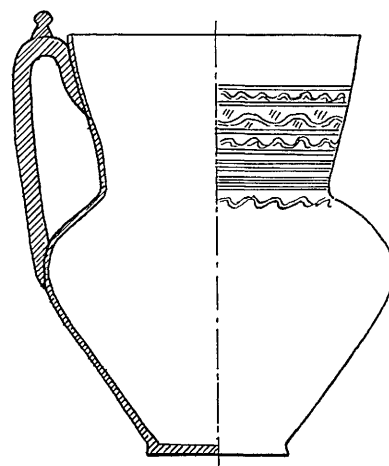
Buffish gray surface. Broad-shouldered body tapers abruptly to a relatively small, high, flat base. On the high, wide-mouthed neck, a band of incised leaflike forms enclosed in rectangles, bordered above and below by a narrow band of pricking between incised lines. At the collar, which does not project, a band of incised lines. Chattering on the shoulder. Two-element thumbknob on handle.

Tenth century. Many vessels of this shape were found, most having combed and incised decorations on the neck, similar combed lines at the collar, and chattering on the shoulder. Although none were found with lids at hand, such pitchers as this and the following five were furnished with lids of the type presented as 47.

23 DRINKING PITCHER

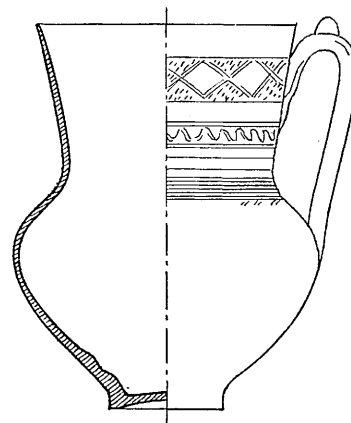
H 19.5, W 14 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.193

Greenish gray surface. Tall neck. Body tapers down to a slightly splayed foot. Base slightly concave. A very popular shape in Nishapur during the tenth century. Neck decorated with incised circumscribing lines forming two bands, the upper one containing diagonal combings, the lower a combed wavy line. At the collar, the customary band of incised lines. Shoulder chattered. Thumbknob on handle. Necks of related pitchers were sometimes more simply decorated. In some the wavy band was repeated



1:3

several times. A fairly common neck decoration was a band of lozenges on a pricked ground:



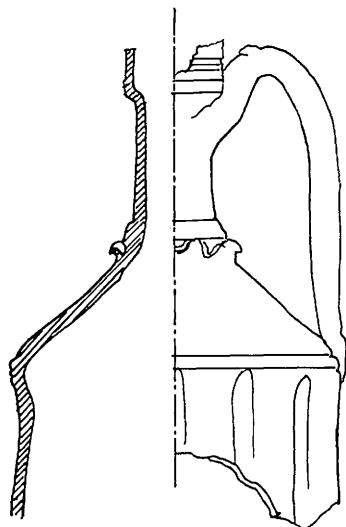
1:3

24 DRINKING PITCHER

H 17.1, W 13.5 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.214

Greenish gray surface. The shape more elaborate than that of any of the preceding pitchers. Body divided into two zones by means of a clearly defined waist; body widest just above this. Base, slightly concave, has two bevels. Neck decoration, consisting of combed straight and wavy lines, somewhat resembles that on 23. The collar, instead of having the usual band of parallel lines, has a series of bubblelike projections with flattened tops. The upper zone of the body, somewhat flattened in places, is chattered. The waist is decorated with an incised wavy line. Beneath this, serving as the lower border of the waist, is a line of diagonal indentations. The handle, whose lower end attaches to the upper zone of the body, has a thumbknob made in two tiers. Not earlier than eleventh century. Production continued into the twelfth.

Another example of this type, in the Teheran museum, has the upper zone, likewise chattered, indented in places by means of a short, straight-edged tool. Belonging to this later period, when indentations of all sorts seem to have been fashionable, is a fragment found in the Bazaar Tepe:



1:3

25 PITCHER

H 14.5, W 15.8 cm ; Tepe Madrasel
MMA 39.40.121

Greenish gray surface. Unusually short neck, wide shoulder, sharply tapered body, high, slightly concave base. Incised parallel lines on the neck form a band that contains a combed wavy line and some small crescent-shaped scratches. Additional lines appear at the collar, on the upper surface of the shoulder, and at the shoulder itself. Beneath the last mentioned is a row of dimples, made by pressing a finger into the clay (see also 39, 64). Such dimples are a clear indication of manufacture after the Samanid period: a date of the eleventh century or later. Con-

firming this, the vessel was found at a high level in a site that was used into the twelfth century.

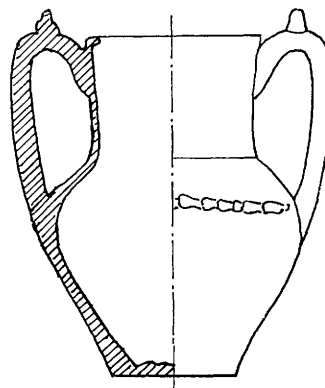
Dimpling, a very old practice, is found in Assyrian "palace" ware of the ninth and eighth centuries B.C. Here it occurs on the lower part of handleless drinking vessels, where its purpose was to keep the users fingers from slipping. In the Islamic period the dimpling was simply decorative. For a variation of the dimpling technique in an unglazed cup not made in Nishapur, see Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 36B.

26 TWO-HANDLED DRINKING PITCHER

(one handle restored)

H 12.7, W 14 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 37.40.4

Greenish gray surface. Body tapers down from high shoulder to form a clearly defined foot. Base concave, slight pad at center. Neck decorated with random combed lines; collar encircled with usual band of combed lines. Additional lines incised upon upper surface of shoulder. Tenth century. Though not as common as one-handed pitchers, two-handed pitchers were not rare in Nishapur. Another example, not earlier than the end of the tenth century, had thumbknobs on the handles, and in place of the combed decoration an applied strip of simple barbotine at the shoulder:



1:3

27 TWO-HANDLED PITCHER

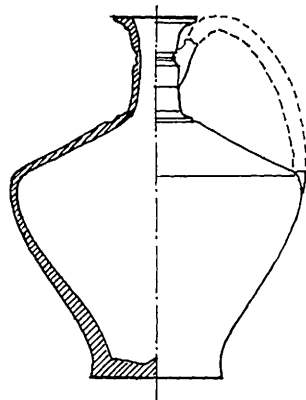
H 14.8, W 14.8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Short neck, with body tapering to form a clearly defined foot, the shape similar to that of 26. A spout has been added, terminating in a wide cylinder with everted lip. Thumbknobs on handles. Neck decorated with a band of lozenges incised between circumscribing lines, a common adornment on drinking pitchers. Collar encircled with the usual combed lines. Tenth century.

- 28 PITCHER (lower part of handle restored)
H 22.5, W 15.6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.53

Greenish gray surface. Narrow neck with high, projecting collar; wide flat lip with rounded edge. High shoulder, with body tapering to a slightly splayed foot. Base somewhat concave. Thumbknob on handle. Neck decorated with circumscribing lines, shoulder with a broad band of combed wavy lines between pairs of parallel incised lines.

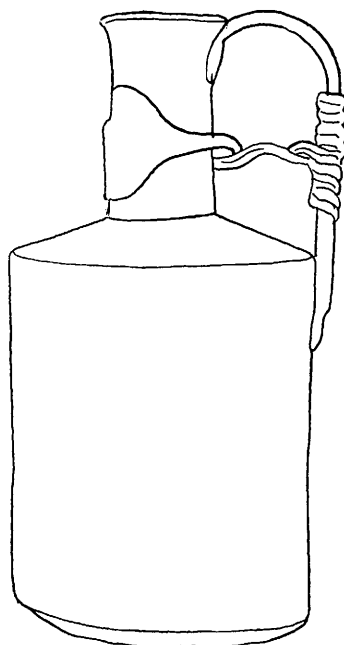
A common tenth-century shape. Such pitchers were furnished with a domed cover with a flat projecting ledge to match the flat lip (46) and a tubular extension that fitted into the pitcher's neck. Not all such pitchers had a thumbknob on the handle. One from Sabz Pushan had no combed decoration and a very sharp angle between the shoulder and the sharply tapered body:



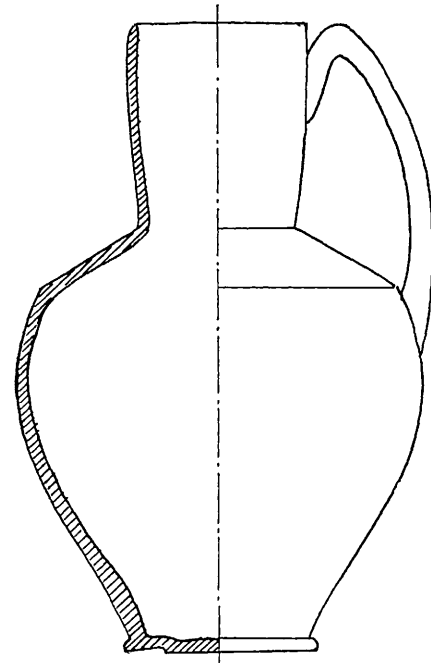
29 PITCHER

H 28, W 14.2 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.106

Warm greenish surface. Neck tapers downward to a ridge at the collar, shoulder slopes out to meet a groove at the top of the cylindrical body. Flat base. Plain handle. No decoration. The shape closely resembles that of a ninth-



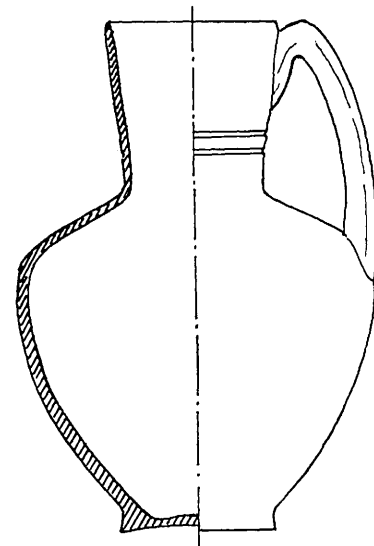
century metal pitcher found in Tepe Madraseh. This sharply sloping shoulder combined with a straight-sided body was a feature of eighth-century unglazed pottery at Khirbat al Mafjar (Baramki, *Quarterly of the Dept. of Antiquities in Palestine*, X, p. 99, fig. 7). Another type of pitcher, with the sharp shoulder of 29 but with a rounded



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tapering body, was found in Sabz Pushan. A further variant came from the Qanat Tepe:



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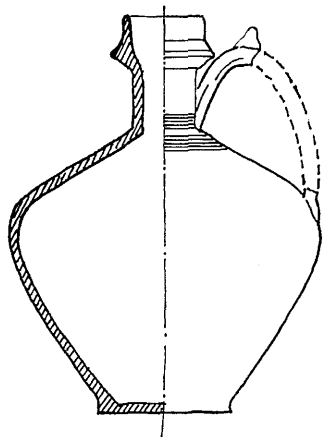
30 PITCHER

H 22.5, W 14.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Reddish body, greenish surface. Generally the shape of 28, with added flange just below the mouth. A domed lid,

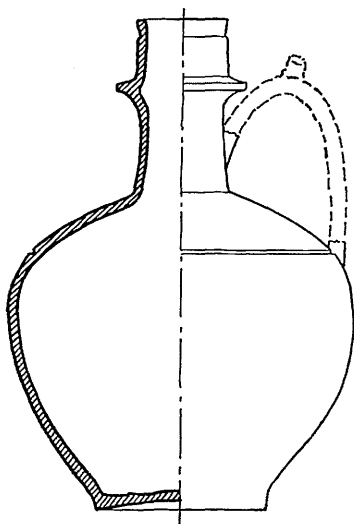
1:3

fitted over this, would not easily be displaced. The neck has a double collar; the lower part is adorned with the usual parallel lines, the upper with two parallel lines surmounted by a wavy line. Probably eleventh century. A very similar pitcher was found in Sabz Pushan, a shape



1:3

that was also glazed brown in Nishapur. A variation (unglazed) with a ledge to support a lid was found in the Vil-



1:3

lage Tepe. The mouth of 30 continued into the twelfth century in eastern Iran and was used even later in glazed wares, although the shape of the body became more globular (Bahrami, *Gurgan Faïences*, pl. XIII, center; pl. XXXIX).

31 DRINKING PITCHER

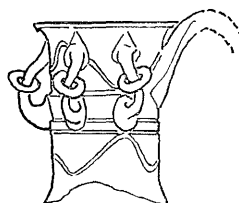
H 14, W 11.1 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Reddish body, greenish surface. Neck, with wide mouth, tapers to a slight ridge at collar. Rounded shoulder. Wide, flat base with suggestion of foot. Such a base is uncommon in the one-handled drinking pitchers of Nishapur. The suggestion of a foot is a feature of some unglazed pottery vessels of Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, p. 6, fig. 2).

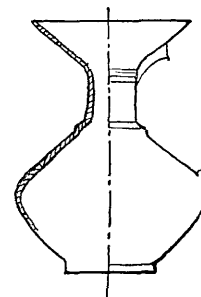
32 PITCHER

H 14.9, W 9.9 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 37.40.5

Greenish buff surface. Tall, narrow, slightly flaring neck, low, wide body, clearly defined foot, flat base. Incised lines around collar and just below it. Two-tiered thumbknob on handle. Tenth century. Not a common shape in Nishapur. (For a similar shape in the pottery of Merv, see Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 351, fig. 76, top row.) The narrow neck of a



1:3



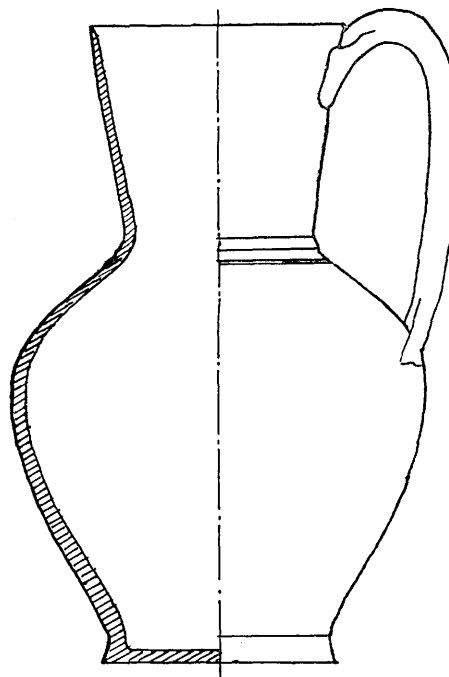
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pitcher found in Sabz Pushan had five loops attached just beneath the rim, each loop encircled by a freely moving pottery ring. Another unusual shape is that of a narrow neck with widely flaring rim, exemplified in a vessel from Tepe Madraseh, probably of the tenth century.

33 PITCHER

H 15, W 11.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.216

Greenish gray surface. Slightly flaring neck, almost spherical body, clearly marked foot, flat base. Undecorated. Ninth century. Similarly shaped pitchers were covered with opaque yellow glaze and green splashes (Group 7, 13). A small unglazed pitcher of much the same shape was found at Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, p. 6, fig. 6). In some Nishapur examples there is a double collar, rather than the simple one of 33, as in an example from Tepe Madraseh:



1:3

34 PITCHER

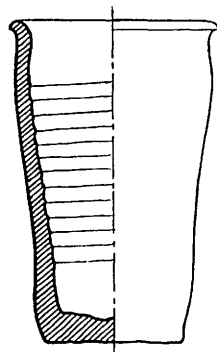
H 14.5, W 10.8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.40

Greenish gray surface. Body rather squat, with flat base. Narrow neck with two-stepped collar above a slightly projecting band. Incised circumscribing lines at lip. For a similar collar, see 10. Probably late ninth century.

35 BEAKER

H 12.4, W 8.4 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.48

Greenish gray surface. Poorly potted: thick, asymmetrical, with rough surface and unsmoothed finger grooves around center. Undecorated. Ninth century. Also from Tepe Madraseh came a vessel, perhaps also a beaker, possibly of the tenth century, with slightly protruding lip. Like 35 it shows the horizontal grooves made by the potter's fingers, but in this case only on the inside:



1:3

36 DRINKING PITCHER

H 15, W 12.4 cm ; Vineyard Tepe
MIB

Slightly flaring neck, pronounced high shoulder, small, flat base. Thick-walled. No thumbknob on handle. Undecorated. A poor man's version of 23. An area on the shoulder, burned reddish in the kiln, shows as a dark tone.

37 CUP

H 10.3, W 11.4 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

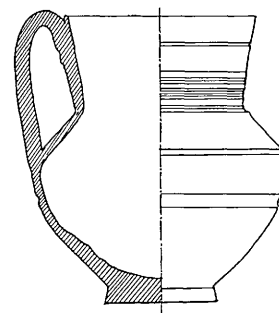
Reddish body, buff surface. Short, nearly vertical neck, high shoulder, body tapered to small, flat base. Tenth century.

38 CUP (handle restored)

H 10.1, W 10 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.89

Greenish gray surface. Tapered top, narrow mouth, deeply grooved body, small, flat base. Probably eleventh century.

An unusual shape, hardly convenient for the action of drinking. A cup from Tepe Madraseh, related to this one through its deep, wide groove on the body, had a wide,



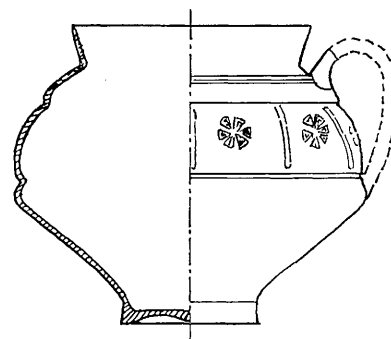
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flaring mouth. An unglazed cup shaped like 38, probably also of the eleventh century, was found in Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 275, fig. 30, bottom row).

39 CUP (restored)

H 8.3, W 12.9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.43

Greenish buff surface. Thinly potted. Wide mouth, thin lip. Below this, an encircling convex ring. Transition to shoulder marked by narrow ridge. Body tapers sharply to flat base. Handle, a ring with flat sides, surmounted by thumbknob, rounded at top. At the vessel's shoulder, a row of dimples (further comment on this at 25), indicating manufacture in the eleventh century or later. A twelfth-century version, also thinly potted, decorated with stamped rosettes separated by a vertical groove, was found in the Bazaar Tepe:



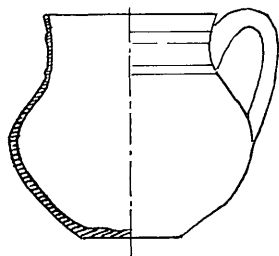
1:3

40 CUP

H 12, W 13 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MMA 40.170.182

Poorly cleaned, gritty clay, reddish at core with yellowish gray surface. The shape seems to be a development of 37, the neck more clearly defined, with a ridge at the collar, the lip thickened and turned out. Flat base. Found at the top level of an area that flourished to the end of the twelfth century. No cups of this shape, as distinct from 37, were

found in the ninth- or tenth-century areas. Another form of these cups was found in the top level of the Bazaar Tepe:



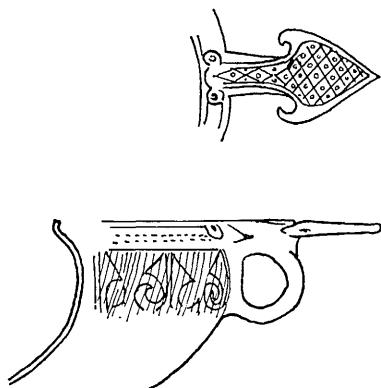
1:3

41 CUP FRAGMENT

H 13.2, W 12.7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.608

Greenish surface. Body widest near base, tapering upward with a slight concavity near the thin lip. The foot (missing) was doubtless like that of 43. The principal decoration consists of two incised curved stems with short, combed leaves. A combed ellipse appears between the stems. Above and below this decoration, a band of wavy and straight lines. The missing side of the cup may have been similarly decorated. The handle is formed of a flat strap into which two slots have been cut, end to end, with a pricked point between them. Two flat pellets are affixed at the top of the handle. From a twelfth-century location.

Of a somewhat earlier date is a cup fragment from Sabz Pushan; approximately hemispherical, the cup was pro-



1:3

vided with a ring handle surmounted by a projecting, flat thumbknob. The knob, like the shoulder of the cup, was decorated with scratched designs.

42 CUP

H 10.8, W 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

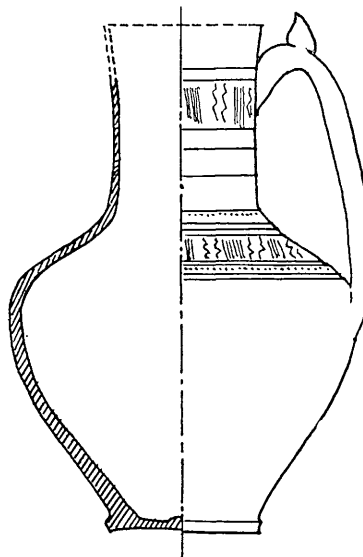
Gray surface. Body widest near base, tapering gently upward to lip, sharply downward to small foot. Mouth oval rather than circular, an unusual feature. The long diameter, on the axis with the handle, measures 6.2 centimeters, the short diameter 5.7. Thumbknob on handle. Decora-

tion: three combed wavy bands of unequal width, the center one supplemented above and below by short combed strokes. Of earlier date than 41 and 43, and apparently their prototype.

43 a,b CUP (handle restored, copying 41)

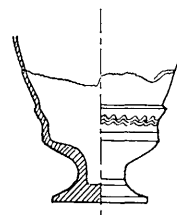
H 15.8, W 14 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.119

Greenish gray surface. Widest diameter low, the body then cutting in sharply to form a high foot. Base slightly concave. The decoration is asymmetrical, a feature not typical of the unglazed ware of Nishapur. Three bands of circumscribing lines were incised while the piece turned on the wheel, forming two registers. In the upper register, on one side, a simple two-strand braid was incised; in the lower, a wider, more elaborate braid was given a pricked background. On the other side of the cup the registers are filled with double wavy lines, forming a V in the upper register, a cross in the lower. The registers and horizontal bands are crossed in three places by vertical bands formed of double straight lines enclosing double wavy lines. From a location active in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. From the same late area came a pitcher with a pointed



1:3

thumbknob on the handle. Its scratched decoration, of a type found only after the tenth century, includes vertical straight lines and zigzags. Apart from cups, there is some evidence that footed goblets were made. No good example was found intact, but the base of such a vessel was found in Sabz Pushan:



1:3

44 LAMP OR CANDLESTICK

D 16, H 5.2 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Reddish body, greenish surface. Within a circular, nearly vertical-sided dish there rises, somewhat higher than the dish's rim, a cup. A green-glazed candlestick found at Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, p. 27, fig. 80) has a center cup with flaring top that rises even higher.

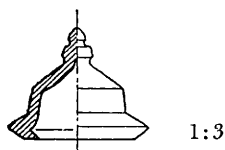
45 LAMP OR CANDLESTICK

D 17.8, H 5.6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.103

Reddish body, greenish surface. The center cup, rising less high than that of 44 and curving inward somewhat at the top, is remarkably like the center cup in a monochrome-glazed assembly of dishes (Group 9, 39).

46 LID

H 5.3, W 6 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 36.20.43

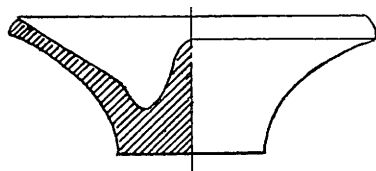


Greenish gray surface. Simply made and unadorned. The dome shape and flange indicate a use on such pitchers as 30. Lids of similar shape but with a downward projection beneath the flange covered such pitchers as 28.

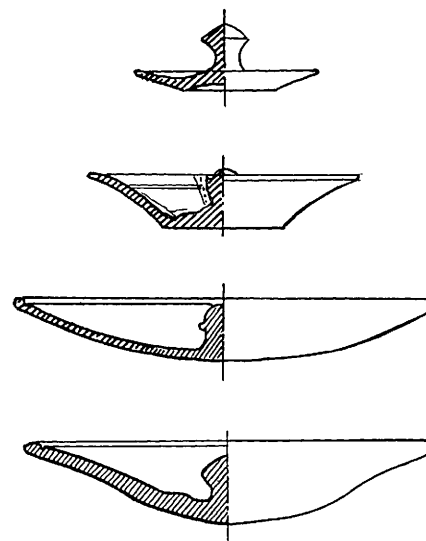
47 LID

W 11 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.155

Greenish gray surface. Concave in shape, sloping down from the rim to the central knob. Two circumscribing grooves, one near the rim, the other halfway down the wall. Eight groups of dots pricked in the clay, five between the two grooves, three around the knob. The groups, consisting of a circle of dots around a central dot, recall the slip-painted rosettes seen in the ware with the colored engobe (Group 5, 1, 17, 18). Many lids of about this shape were found, some decorated with pricking, others with incised rays. Although no vessel was found with such



1:3



1:3

a lid in position, the lids were obviously made to cover such wide-mouthed pitchers as 22-27.

48 LAMP

L 8.2 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Buff clay. Small, triangular in shape, and handleless: a form rare in Nishapur. The typical Nishapur lamp of this variety (Group 9, 20) has a rounder body and a pinched spout. A stone lamp of much the same shape as 48 was unearthed at Nishapur, and similar stone lamps have been found at Ctesiphon. 48 was undoubtedly brought to Nishapur by a traveler. Probably ninth century.

49 LID

W 9.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Reddish core, buff surface. Domed body surmounted by knob with wavy flange. Encircling the lid, a starlike band made of two incised lines enclosing a line of pricked dots. An additional line of dots encircles the knob. Small triangles of clay have been removed from the angles of the band, the potter cutting through from the top surface. Domed lids of this width were less common than concave lids like 47.

50 LID

W 7.8 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.124

Greenish gray surface. Domed body surmounted by knob composed of several elements, including a small flange and a rounded top. Openwork decoration based on crossing straps, with figure eights and rings left in the squares and triangles. The straps and figure eights are adorned with

pricked lines. Between the openwork and the rim, a border of incised interlocking S-forms and a groove.

51 LID

W 8.6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.156

Buff clay, greenish surface. Flat surface with sharply up-turned vertical rim. A variation of the concave type (47). The knob is ringed with pricked dots. The body is pierced by two rings of circular holes, the holes surrounded with a circle of pricked dots. A wavy line encircles the piece near the rim. Tenth century.

52 LANTERN (some restoration)

H 24.5, W 15 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.87

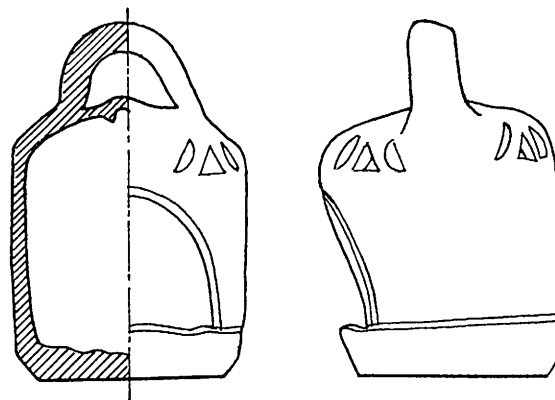
Warm greenish gray surface. High shoulder, moderately tapered body, slightly concave base. Decoration consists largely of openwork in six registers, the cutting done from the outside. The solid strips between the registers are lightly incised with two lines. The three upper registers have a zigzag design, with open triangles and biconvex shapes. The fourth register has an open biconvex shape alternating with two open triangles, point to point. The fifth register has small open triangles and rectangles, the sixth, open biconvex forms. The entrance for the lamp is topped by two openwork triangles. The handle consists of a flat-faced ring with a deeply grooved rim. The top of the shank was extended laterally and the ring pressed into it to make a firm bond. The shank was modeled in two tiers, the lower one grooved horizontally.

Among similar lanterns were some with a rectangular opening for the lamp, the opening probably furnished with a two-leaved door. Fragments of a lantern like 52 showed the addition of stamped designs on the narrow uprights between the perforations. No lanterns of glazed earthenware were found in Nishapur. Lanterns resembling 52 were made earlier, in the Sasanian period, for example, in Qasr-i-abu Nasr. They were of more elongated shape and their perforations, narrower, were less formal in design.

53 LANTERN

H 22, W 14 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Greenish buff surface. Above the semicircular opening for the lamp, to one side, a triangular perforation flanked by slits. Two grooves circumscribe the body. Handle like that of 52. Simpler and less handsome than 52, this type is also less fragile and more often survives. Although it would have been less efficient in emitting light, it would also have been less apt to soot up its usual resting place, the whitewashed niche that is a traditional feature of the Iranian dwelling. A cruder type was furnished with a simple



1:3

loop handle rather than a separately made ring. It is interesting to note that simple perforated lamps of this type were found in the excavations at Ramla, near Jaffa, and dated to the eighth century. Thus the adoption of this particular shape, as opposed to that of the more elongated Sasanian lanterns, was established before those found in Nishapur were made.

54 TWO-HANDLED PITCHER

H 20.5, W 14.8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 36.20.41

Greenish gray surface. Thin wall but poorly potted: body asymmetrical. Everted lip, thin and flat. High shoulder, flat base. Three grooves encircle the neck, one above the attachment of the handles, two below. Probably tenth century.



55 JAR FRAGMENT

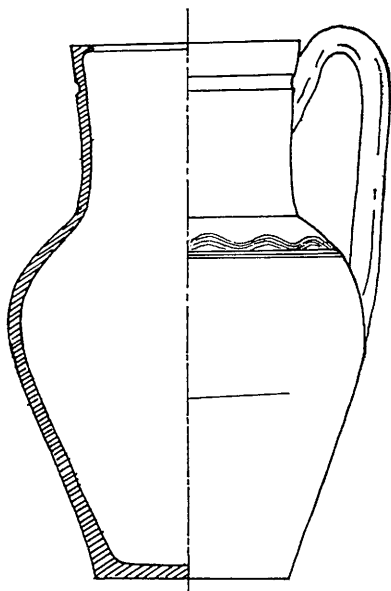
H 18.2, W 12.15 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

On the high shoulder in black pigment the inscription *al mulk lillah* (sovereignty is God's). Beneath this, presumably an identification mark, perhaps the letter R with the number 1811: (R¹¹). Encircling the body is a painted pattern of twisted bands, arranged so that vertical twists alternate with horizontal ones. Near the base, two painted signs of unknown meaning: ♪♪. Discovered in a well sunk from a high level. Probably eleventh century.

56 PITCHER

H 21.6, W 14.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.194

Reddish core, greenish gray surface. Flat base. The flat rim was made by drawing in the clay to form a ledge; the neck thus appears thicker than it actually is. A groove en-



1:3

circles the neck just above the attachment of the handle; a straight combed band surmounted by a wavy combed band encircles the body at the shoulder. This simple but effective combination, appearing with variations on 58, 60, 63, 71, and 72, seems to have been popular in the unglazed ware of Nishapur from the ninth century into the twelfth. Vessels almost identical in shape to 56 but with two handles were found at all the sites.

57 PITCHER

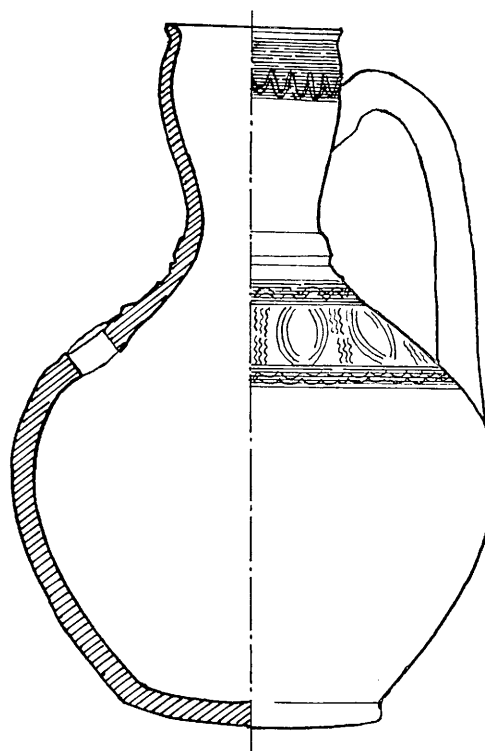
H 23.5, W 13 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Buff surface. Poorly potted. Flat inward-projecting rim (compare 56). Two groups of grooves encircle the piece, one high on the neck, the other on the sloping shoulder.

58 PITCHER

H 23, W 16 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MMA 40.170.195

Gritty red clay, pale greenish buff surface. Three reddish blushes on the body, the result of close packing in the kiln. Long sloping shoulder, with greatest width of vessel only a third of the height from the base. Base slightly concave. Lower attachment of handle on shoulder. Several circumscribing ridges near the lip, the lowest one a projecting ring. This ring is a feature of twelfth-century pitchers (compare 60). Encircling the shoulder, a straight combed band surmounted by a wavy one (compare 56). Found in a high-level well in a twelfth-century area. No pitchers with this type of shoulder were found in areas known to be inhabited in the ninth and tenth centuries. A pitcher from which the spout had been broken, found in Tepe Madra-seh, had a more elaborate profile; it was adorned with both

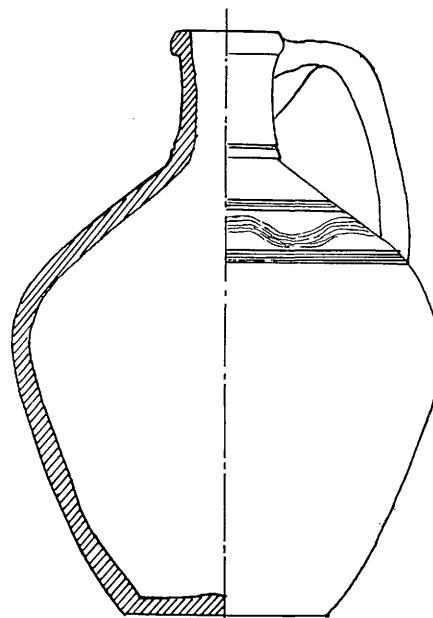


1:3

combed scratchings and incised ornament. Its base resembles that of 58; its walls are comparatively thick except near the rim. Probably twelfth century.

59 PITCHER

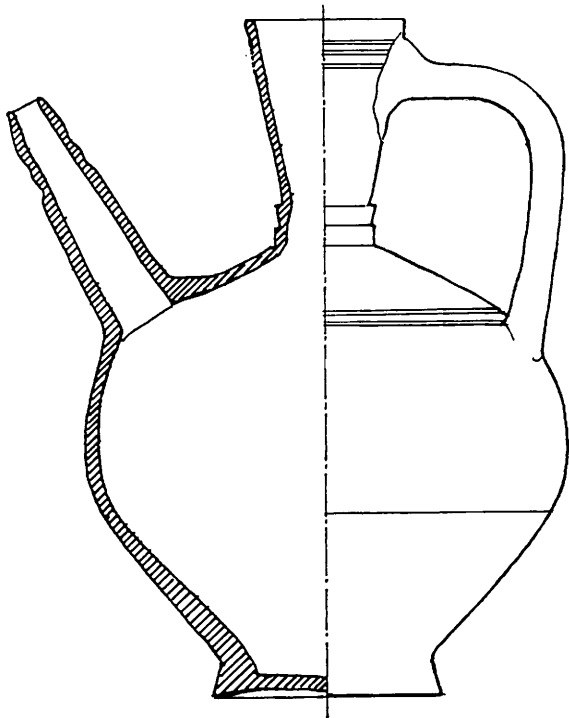
H 24, W 17.3 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MIB



1:3

Made of the same gritty clay as 58. Red core, greenish surface. Poorly potted. Narrow neck with thick, round lip. A slight ridge at the collar. Greatest width of vessel below

midpoint. Lower attachment of handle halfway up shoulder. Decoration on shoulder: a wavy combed band between two combed straight bands. From same location as 58. Twelfth century. An example of the eleventh or twelfth century, furnished with a spout, was found at the East Kilns:



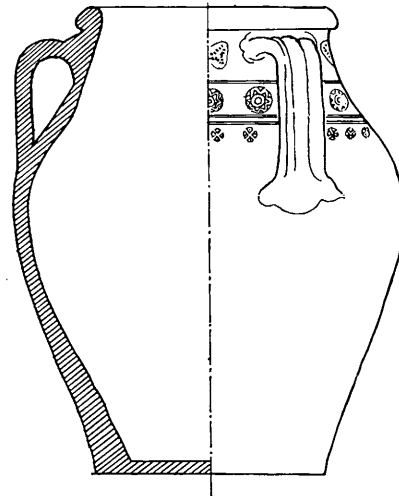
1:4

62 THREE-HANDLED STORAGE JAR

H 54.4, W 42 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MMA 40.170.169

Reddish body, greenish surface. Flat base, rounded lip. On the shoulder, bounded above and below by a pair of inscribed lines, a row of die-stamped impressions. The design, in relief, consists of seven radii, with a group of three dots filling the intervening spaces. A closely related design occurs on the stamped earthenware of Samarra (*Excavations at Samarra, 1936-1939*, II, pl. xxi, lower). Ninth or early tenth century. Another example from the deep level in Sabz Pushan was decorated with impressed stars, while still another was stamped with a design of concentric pentagons.



1:8

A few very large storage jars, sometimes without handles (following the Sasanian tradition) were discovered; one from Qanat Tepe, probably of the ninth century, is shown:

60 PITCHER

H 30.4, W 17.3 cm ; Bazaar Tepe

MMA 40.170.229

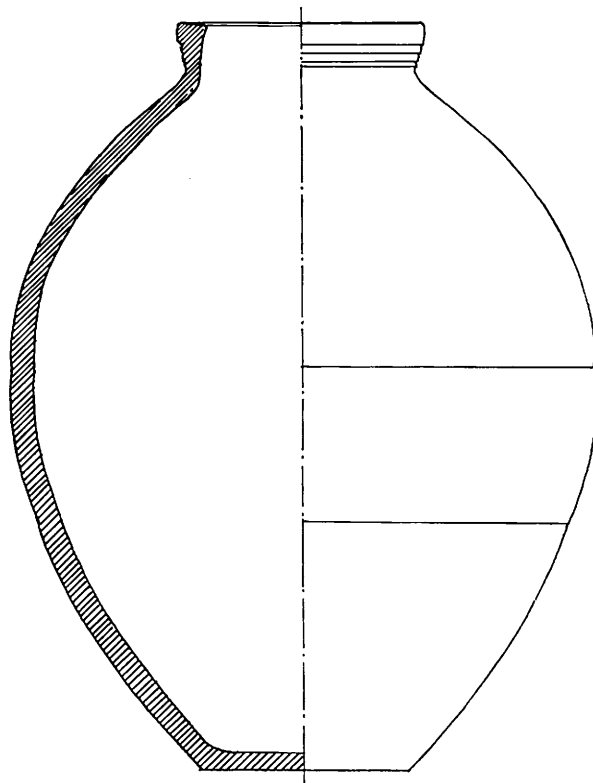
Reddish buff core, greenish surface. In its final stage on the wheel the piece was thoroughly wetted; consequently it appears to have an engobe. (Water jars are made today in Nishapur in this manner.) Greatest width of body at midpoint. Base slightly concave. Mouth has projecting lip. Beneath this, a projecting ring (compare 58), an indication of twelfth-century manufacture. At the collar, a combed band, mostly spalled. On the shoulder, a combed straight band with a wavy band above it (compare 56, 58). From same location as 58 and 59.

61 PITCHER

H 31, W 17.8 cm ; Vineyard Tepe

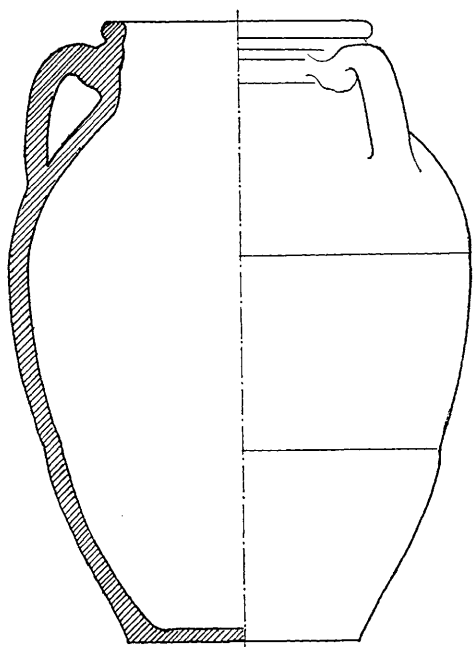
MMA 38.40.189

Reddish core, buff surface. Flat base, high shoulder, tapered neck, flat rim extended inward in manner of 57, 58. Undecorated. Probably tenth century. Somewhat similar pitchers were given a combed decoration (79).

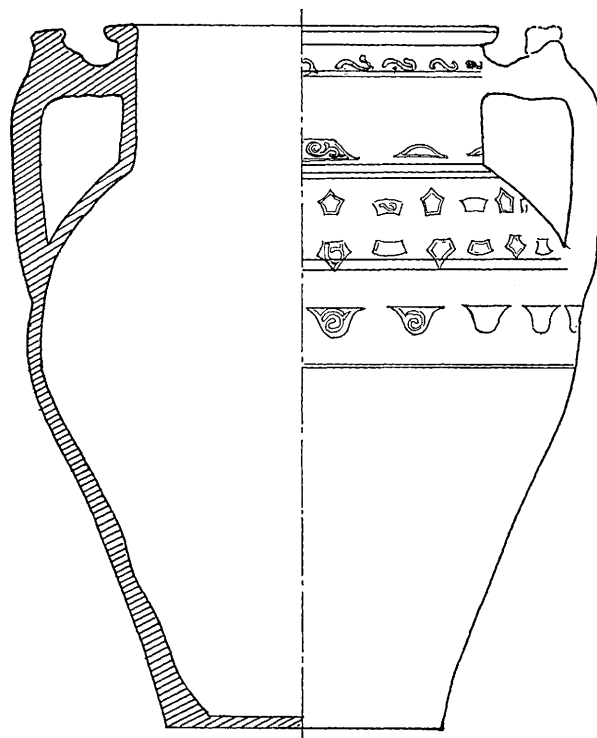


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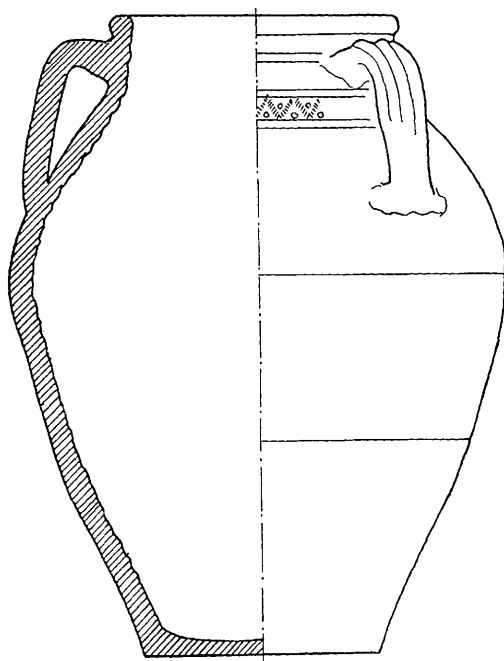
Other large storage jars, usually with three handles, were sometimes left undecorated, or merely given an imprinted



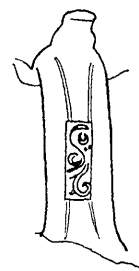
1:8



1:4



1:8

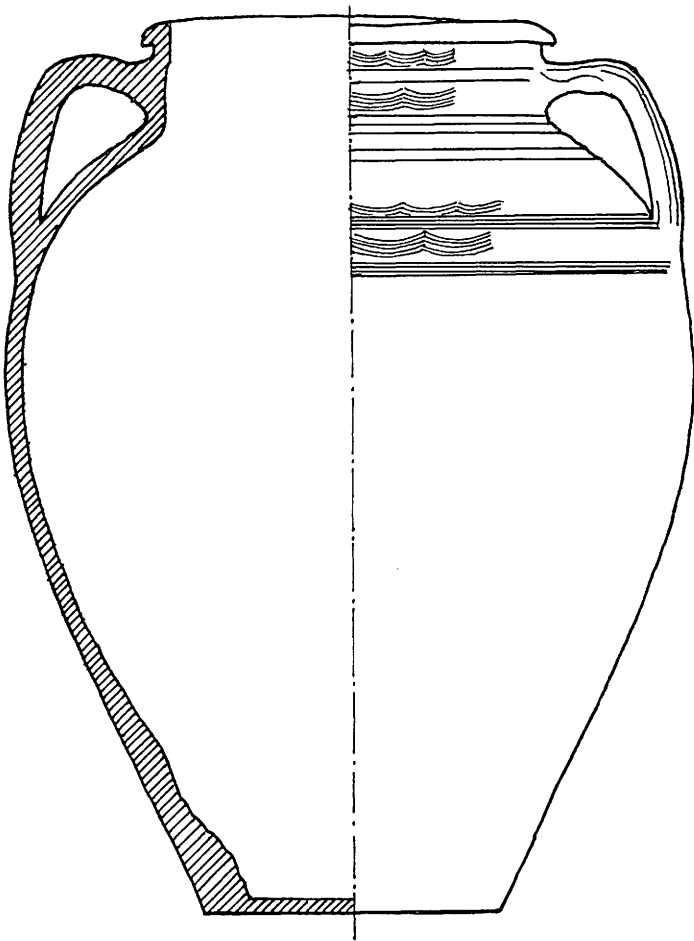


1:4

band at the bottom of the neck. A completely different technique was employed in the decoration of a two-handled storage jar from the Qanat Tepe; the entire vessel was finished with a thin dark red slip on which small designs were painted in white; the handles had thumbknobs and a panel of painted decoration.

63 TWO-HANDLED STORAGE JAR

H 51.1, W 36.9 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB



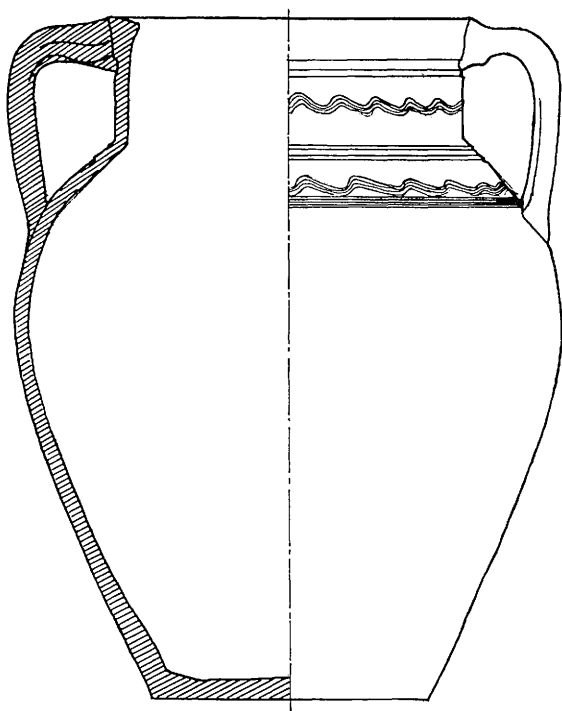
Red body, buff surface. Convex projecting lip. Neck decorated with two combed wavy bands separated by two circumscribing grooves. Below this, several shallow grooves. At bottom of shoulder, two straight combed bands, each surmounted by a wavy one (comment on this decoration at 56). A similar combed decoration was found on storage jars without the projecting rim of 63.

64 THREE-HANDLED STORAGE JAR

(some restoration)

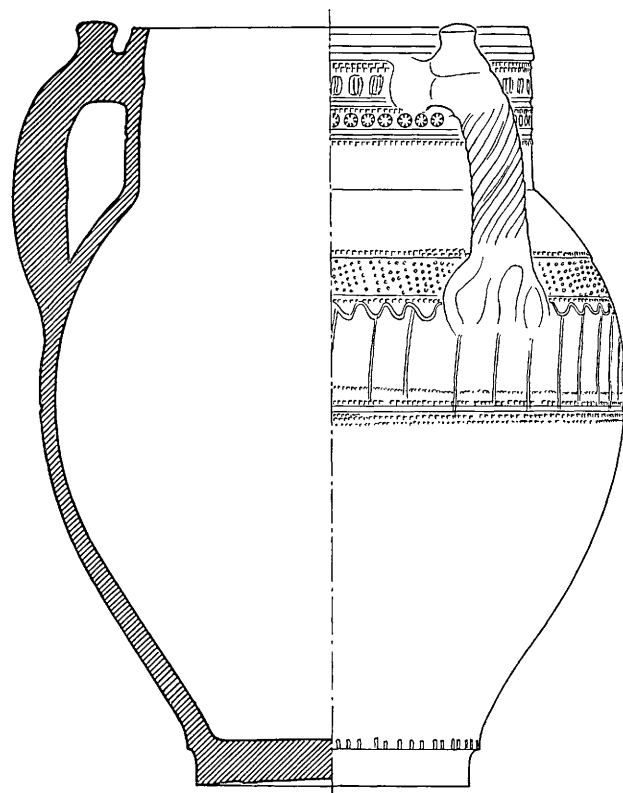
H 45, W 48.4 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.182

Reddish buff surface. Flat base, vertical sides, thick vertical lip. The rather elaborate decoration is divided into registers by means of narrow circumscribing combed bands. The principal features are two registers of graffiato arcaded forms, the upper ones with pointed tops, the lower ones with rounded tops. The upper forms contain slanting lines of tiny curved strokes, the lower ones a dimple. (For comment on dimpling, 25.) On the shoulder, a band of slanting lines made of pricked dots. These and the curved strokes in the arcaded forms were perhaps made with a comb. Just above the base, a row of circular indentations. The handles have been provided with knobs, but on a jar of this size they are more decorative than practical. Several vertical-sided jars with a similar arcaded decoration were found. A related storage jar with three handles, and with both stamped and incised decoration, was found in the top level of the Village Tepe. All these jars are of the eleventh or twelfth century.



1:4

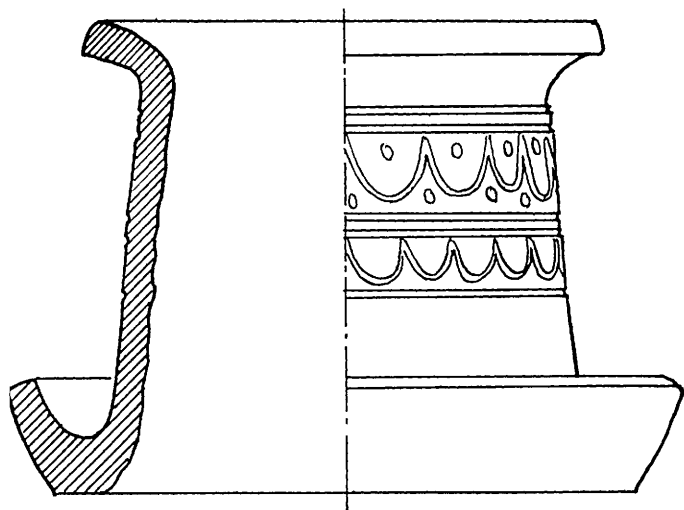
1:4



1:4

65 POTSTAND

H 32.1, W 35 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.183

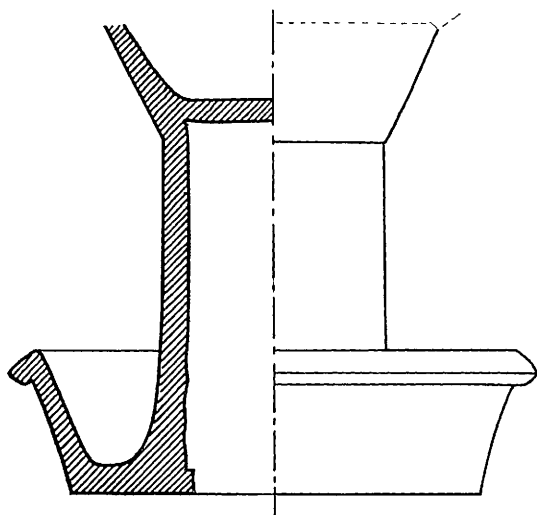


1:3

Reddish core, buff surface. Fashioned from a hollow cylinder, the top edge turned out and down, the bottom edge turned up to form a trough. The trough was probably filled with water as a deterrent to vermin. Grooves circumscribe the body to make two bands, both of which are filled with a series of joined semicircles. Circular dots are added to the spaces of the upper series. Found with 64. Eleventh or twelfth century. Potstands of this shape but without the trough have been found at Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 357, fig. 80, bottom left).

66 FRAGMENT

H 30, W 26.4 cm ; Sabz Pushan
Discarded



1:4

The column rising from the dish is solid. A bowl once flared out from the widened top of the column. This ob-

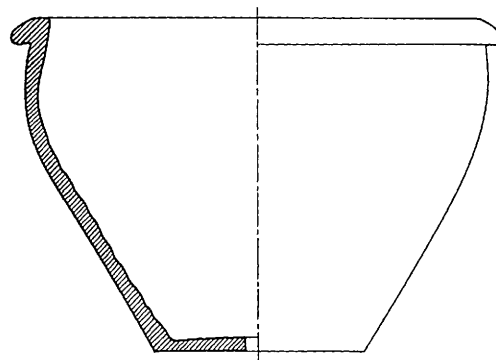
ject, for which no name is known, was found standing with some storage jars next to a wall (Hauser, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, October, 1937, p. 29, fig. 37). It was probably used for storage, with the dish containing water to deter vermin.

Similar objects have been found elsewhere in Iran and in Iraq. Three were unearthed by the Metropolitan Museum at Qasr-i-abu Nasr, a site occupied in Sasanian and early Islamic times. One of these (34.107.38) has a trough at the bottom with a vertical wall, another (34.107.34) has the column rising from a container with convex sides, while the third (in the Teheran museum), practically complete and of the seventh or eighth century, consists of a flowerpotlike container rising from a circular pan with a low vertical wall. A similar and complete example was found at Samarra (*Excavations at Samarra, 1936-1939*, II, pl. XXI, lower); significantly, both its upper container and trough were lined with bitumen, a waterproofing material. This type of container apparently has a remote antiquity, since in Palestine examples with a well-developed lower compartment go back to the second millennium B.C. (Jirku, *Archiv für Orientforschung*, XVII, pp. 135, 136, fig. 3).

67 POT

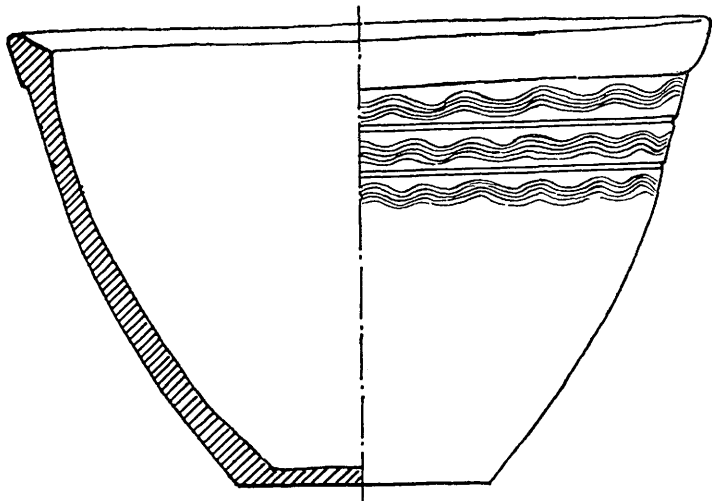
H 25, W 37.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Red core, buff surface. Wide top with rounded rim. Sides taper to small, flat base. Decoration: a circumscribing combed wavy band and groove. Found in a room that contained a wine press. The vessel was embedded in the ground, its rim flush with the plaster floor immediately below the spout of the press's rectangular tank (Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, October, 1937, p. 7, fig. 4). Standing in the bowl was a jar (81). A bowl similar to 67 was found embedded in the floor of a nearby room, apparently a kitchen. Its bottom had been knocked out so that it could serve as a funnel to a drain. A comparable pot, more carefully made, and with a circular orifice in the bottom, was obviously a flowerpot. Still another

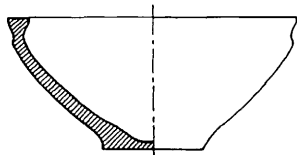


1:4

bowl of much the same shape and size as 67, and found in the same location, contained the remains of a sheep's head.



1:4



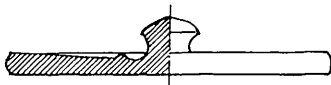
1:4

Other examples related to 67 are shown. Somewhat similar pots were sometimes furnished with handles (95).

68 LID

D 24.5 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Reddish core, buff surface. Simple flat-topped knob, not pierced. Near the edge of the piece, between two deep circumscribing grooves, a line of deep indentations. Tenth or eleventh century. Other lids of this type were found:



1:4

69 LID

D 37 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Red core, yellow surface. Simple loop handle with a gouge beneath it. Molded decoration consisting of a circular band of Kufic script reduced to a repetitive formula. Probably eleventh century.

70 LID

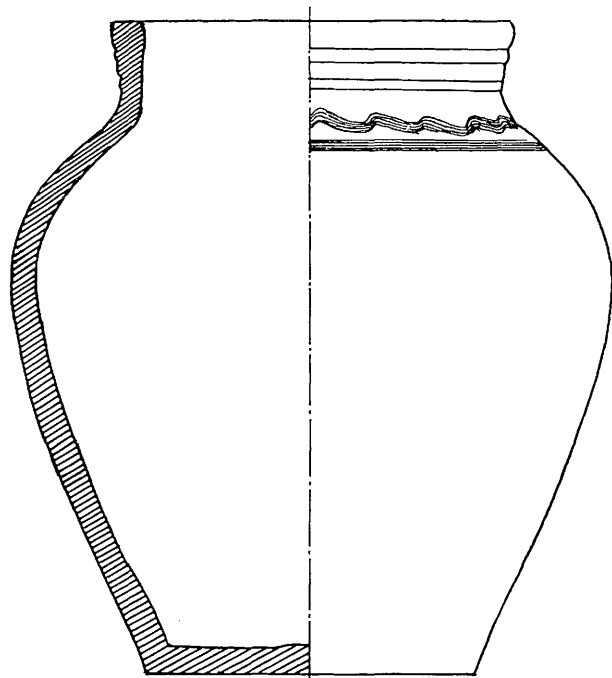
D 31.7 cm ; surface find
MMA 38.40.279

Gritty clay, reddish core, buff surface. Handle like that of 69. Molded decoration applied in two pieces, line of junction visible. The scene is of a lion attacking an ass. Al-

though this was probably repeated on the missing portion, the remains indicate that the pose was not identical. Date uncertain.

71 STORAGE JAR

H 34.5, W 31.6 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB



1:4

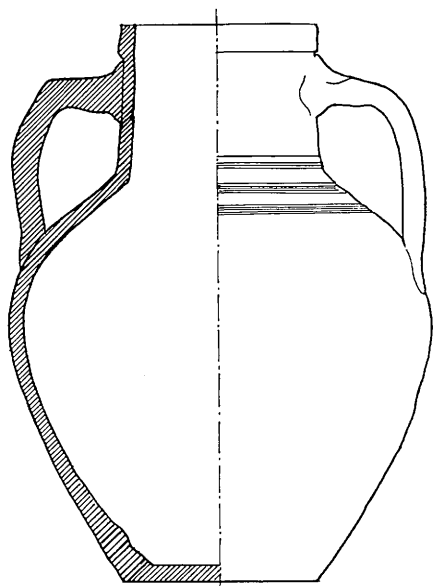
Pinkish buff core, warm gray surface. Slightly flaring neck encircled by four rounded ridges, the uppermost being the rim. High on the shoulder, a straight combed band surmounted by a wavy combed band (comment on this decoration at 56).

72 TWO-HANDLED STORAGE JAR

H 38.7, W 29 cm ; Sabz Pushan

Discarded

Reddish core, greenish buff surface. Short wide neck, heavy wide rim. A combed wavy band encircles the neck, a combed wavy band and a straight band encircle the shoulder. See 56 for comment on this decoration. Jars much like 72 were also made with three handles (62). Also used at Nishapur were two-handed jars with a much narrower neck; some of these were decorated with simple parallel bands of combed lines:



1:4

73 CANDLESTICK

H 33, W 13.3 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MMA 38.40.200

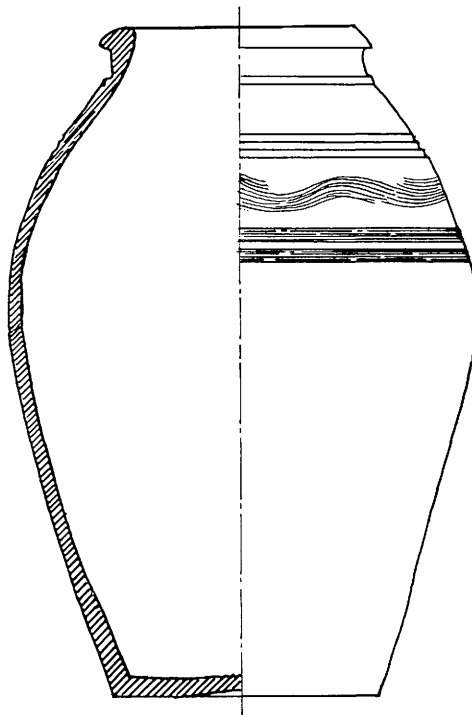
Reddish core, greenish surface. Conical hollow bottom tapers to column. Column decorated at top with two flanges. Lip projects outward horizontally, then turns down vertically to form a deep overhang. Probably tenth century, though very similar pieces seem to have been manufactured somewhat later. Unglazed candlesticks of similar design have also been found at Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 357, fig. 80).

74 JAR

H 34.25, W 21.25 cm ; Qanat Tepe

MIB

Coarse pink clay with greenish yellow surface. Elongated body with no clearly defined neck. An uncommon shape in Nishapur. Decoration encircling shoulder: two widely spaced combed bands with a combed wavy band between. Found by a bathhouse that operated in the eleventh century.



74

1:4

75 CANDLESTICK

H 35.3, W 16.5 cm ; Village Tepe

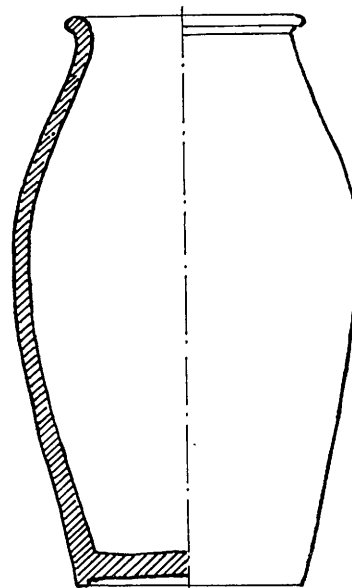
MMA 38.40.122

Buff core, greenish surface. A flap of clay was applied and crimped over the flat base, a band of clay crimped around the column below the everted, flattened lip.

76 JAR

H 23.4, W 13.4 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MMA 40.170.185



1:3

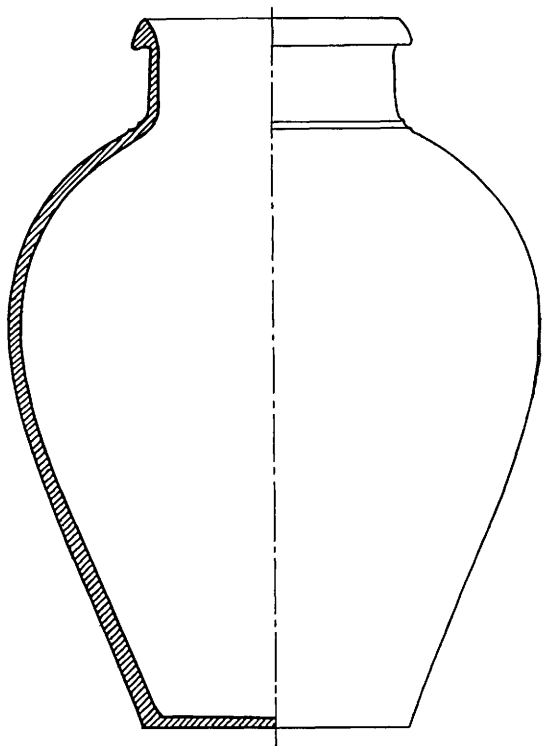
Gritty clay, greenish surface. Poorly made, with a somewhat oval section. Flat base. Everted lip. Another example of an uncommon shape (compare 74). Found in the lowest, ninth-century level.

77 JAR

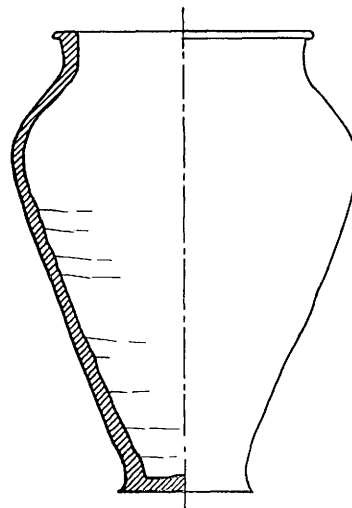
H 20.8, W 14.3 cm ; Sabz Pushan

MIB

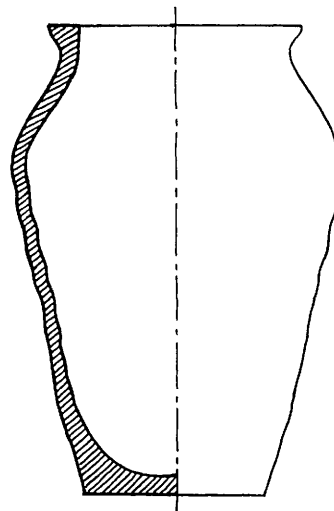
Reddish core, pale greenish surface. Well potted. Ovoid body, neck tapering slightly to lip that projects a little and slopes down. Neck decorated with circumscribing grooves. Probably tenth century. Similar jars were found in all the mounds of Nishapur; the drawing is of one from the Village Tepe:



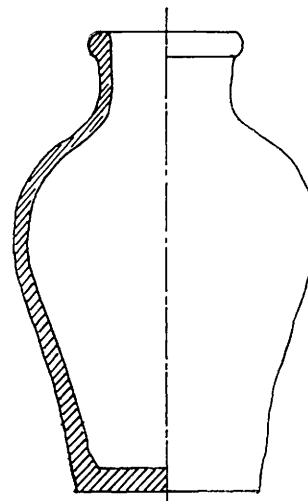
1:3



1:3



1:3



1:3

78 JAR

H 21.6, W 13.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan

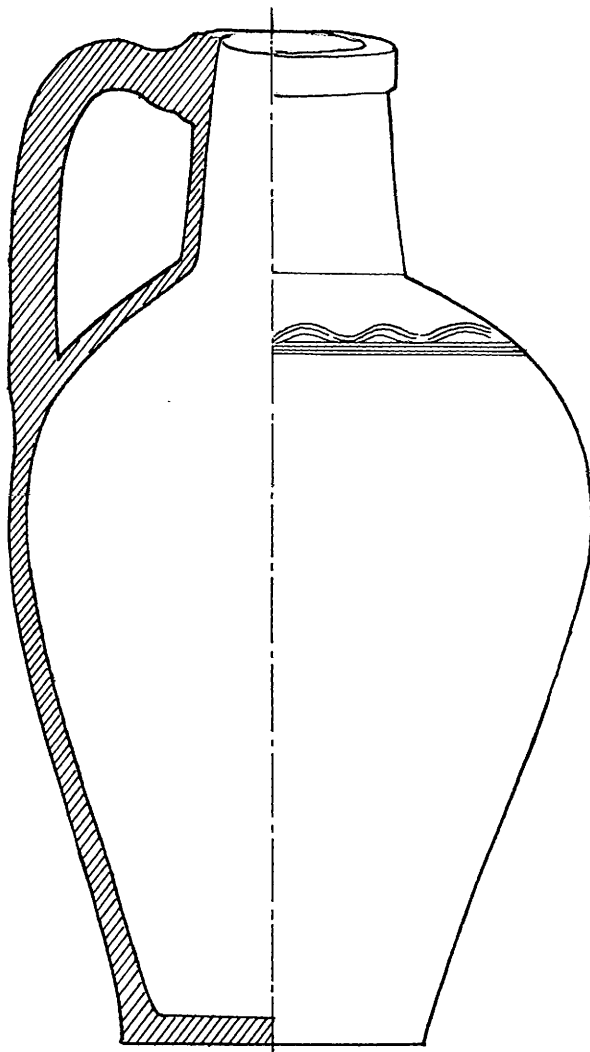
MMA 38.40.276

Reddish buff surface. Poorly potted. Flat base. Concave neck, everted lip. The potter did not bother to smooth away the grooves on the body. In some jars of this type, such as one from Tepe Madrasedh, the marks of the potter's fingers are to be seen on the inside rather than the outside. Pieces like 78 in shape, though less tall, were found. Some examples have a more carefully constructed lip.

79 PITCHER

H 23, W 13.1 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.102

Greenish surface with blush of red from close packing in kiln. Flat base. High shoulder, tapering neck. Two grooves encircle the neck, two straight combed bands, the shoulder. Tenth or eleventh century. Other pitchers resembling this were found, some with two handles and some decorated with combed lines:



80 JAR

H 24, W 20.3 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Well-cleaned reddish clay. Ovoid body, slightly tapered neck, projecting lip. At the neck, a raised collar decorated with sloping indentations. On the neck, a band of combed waves. The raised collar is a feature of Sasanian pottery excavated at Qasr-i-abu Nasr (Hauser, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, December, 1934, Sec. 2, p. 12, fig. 15, p. 15, fig. 21).

81 JAR

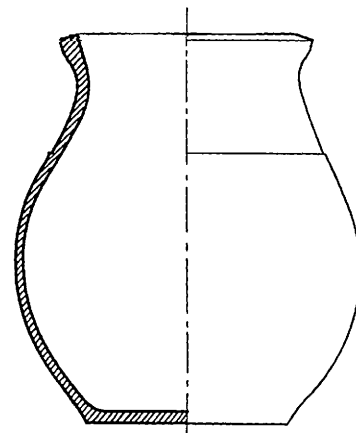
H 26.8, W 21.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.123

Reddish core, greenish buff surface. Flat base. Projecting lip and rilled neck, the central rill having a series of depressions probably made by a fingernail. On the upper shoulder, a zigzag. Around the upper part of the body, horizontal grooves. Between the upper ones, a series of shallow diagonal depressions. Between the lower grooves, two combed waves that form a braid. The lower part of the body was pared with a tool. Found standing in 67.

82 JAR

H 23.2, W 20.9 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan
MMA 36.20.58

Reddish surface. Ovoid body with short neck flaring to round lip. Beneath the lip, a circumscribing broad groove. On the shoulder, a band of decoration consisting of diagonal gouges between two incised lines. A change of angle near the base of the jar suggests a foot. A jar of smaller size and of a form not represented among the preceding exam-



1:3

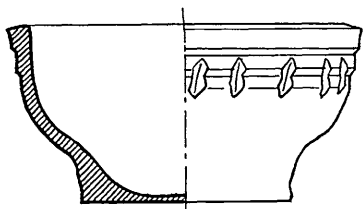
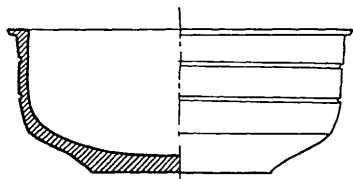
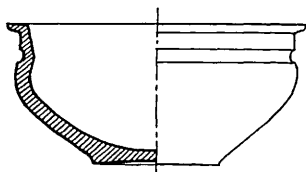
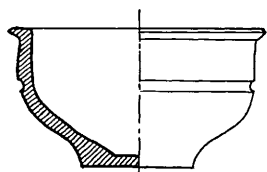
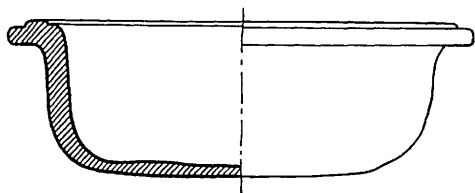
1:3

ples came from a deep-level pit in the Village Tepe. It is interesting in that it has a slight projection about a third of the way down from the rim, the greatest width occurring about two-thirds of the way down. The projection is also to be seen in Sogdian pottery of the seventh and eighth centuries (Marshak, *Trudy*, V, p. 183, fig. 4, no. 1).

83 DISH

D 10.7, H 6 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Pinkish surface. From small, flat base, sides flare out, then, halfway up, become nearly vertical. A circumscribing groove just above the change of angle. Flat, everted rim. Evidently used by a painter, the dish contains blue pigment. Many quite similar dishes were found, none glazed. In some the upper part of the body and the groove were cut by vertical gouges.

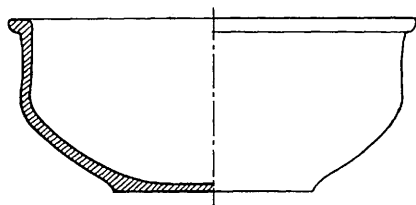


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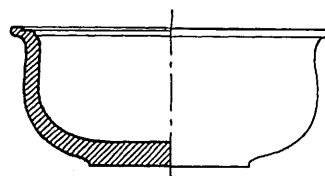
84 DISH

D 13.5, H 5.5 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 39.40.110

Buff surface. Flat base. Sides flare out in lower third, then rise nearly vertically to flat, everted rim. No decoration. Used as a paint pot; contained cinnabar. Other dishes of this shape had a simple decoration on the rim. No dishes of this shape were glazed. A very similar dish from the same site contained blue pigment. Yet another paint pot,

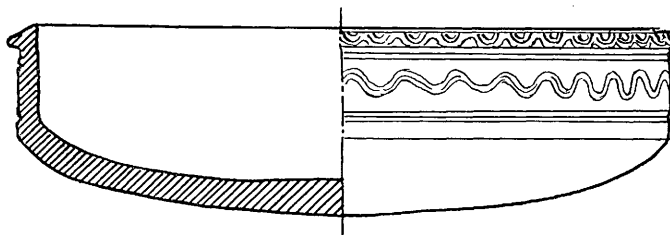


1:3



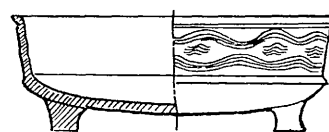
1:3

found at the Qanat Tepe, had the inside rim grooved. Other low dishes were decorated and were not used as paint pots. An example from Tepe Madraseh has a sloping piecrust rim, decorated with grooves and wavy bands; the



1:3

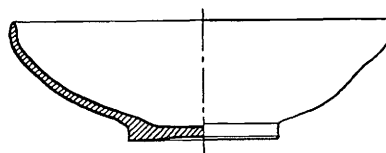
base is convex rather than flat. A more sophisticated variant has combed decoration on the outside and a convex base furnished with three short legs; examples of this form were found in the Qanat Tepe and at Sabz Pushan:



1:3

85 DISH

D 15.5, H 4.5 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 39.40.20

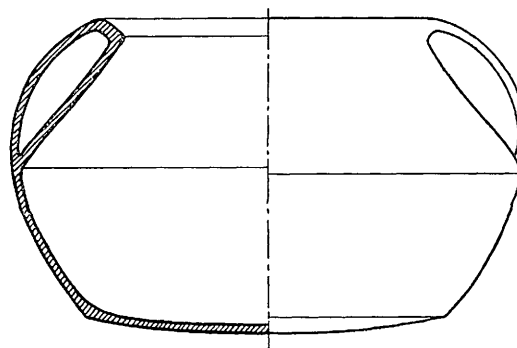


1:3

Pinkish surface. Well-defined foot. Sides flare widely, then turn upward, rising to a low, thin rim. Dishes of this general shape were common, unglazed and glazed.

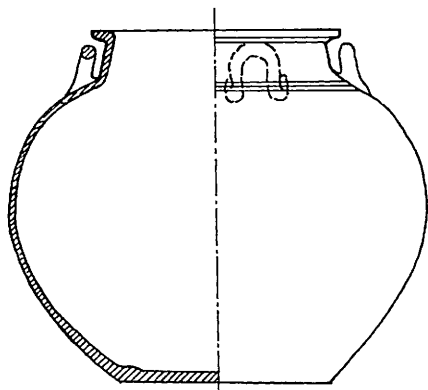
86 COOKING POT

D 19.6, H 16.8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB



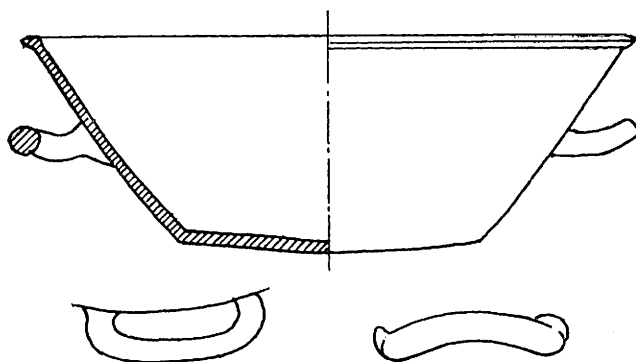
1:3

Gritty clay, reddish core, warm gray to buff surface. Discolored to shoulder by use. Thinly potted. Base convex. Walls rise hemispherically to sharp change of angle at midpoint, then narrow with slight concavity. Two flat, wide, narrow-waisted handles decorated with a single incised line connect with the projecting lip. A common shape for Nishapur cooking pots. Some were of larger size, all have surprisingly thin walls. The decorative line on the handle is not always present. Distinct from this type with sloping shoulder and wide handles are others with almost spherical body and two hook-shaped handles affixed immediately below the neck:

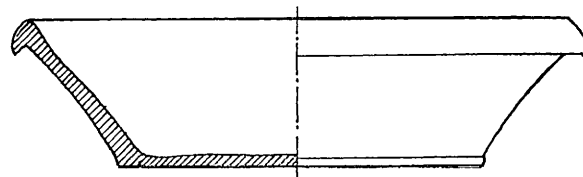
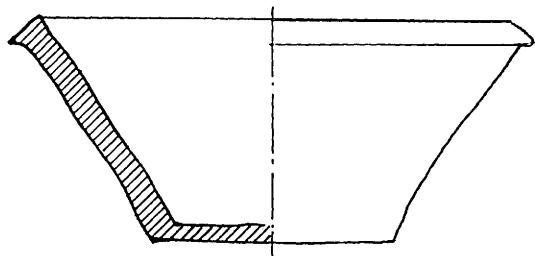


87 PAN

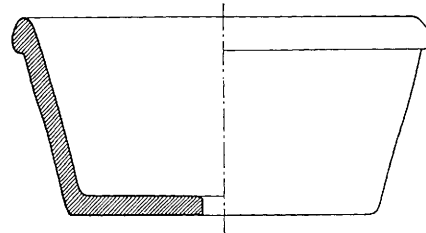
D 24.6, H 8.6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB



Buff core, greenish surface. An unusual shape, the walls flaring from flat base to projecting lip. Two horizontal loop handles. Vessel shows no sign of use over fire. Probably ninth century. Pans without handles are conspicuously fewer in Nishapur than at the late Sasanian site of Qasr-i-abu Nasr, and all were of inferior workmanship to 87. They have a common feature, a rather wide rim sloping



1:6



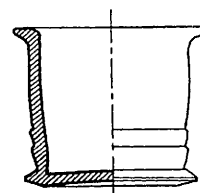
1:6

downward and out to afford a finger grip. One example had a central orifice and presumably served as a flowerpot.

88 COOKING POT

D 10.4, H 9.4 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.45

Gray clay. Chopped straw was added to it; as a result there are minute holes on the surface. Flat base, vertical sides. Two circumscribing grooves near lip, two horizontal handles, each adorned on top with a series of indented strokes. A vessel of similar shape was found at Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 226, fig. 7). A cylindrical vessel without handles, given a projecting rim, was found at Sabz Pushan:



1:3

89 CRUCIBLE (?)

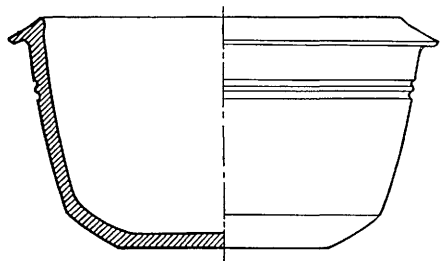
W 13.1, H 9.4 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Reddish yellow surface, fire-blackened on underside. Hemispherical in shape, with three legs. The flat projecting rim is divided into three flanges. The missing side of the vessel was undoubtedly furnished with a spout. The flanges (top surface) have a molded decoration of zigzags and dotted circles. Projections remaining on the two opposed flanges suggest that something has broken off. Probably this was a loop handle of clay, resembling the handles on bronze vessels of similar shape of the twelfth to fourteenth century, found in Daghestan, Gurgan, and elsewhere. For a small bronze vessel of this type and for others, including one of stone, see Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, June, 1944, p. 288.

1:3

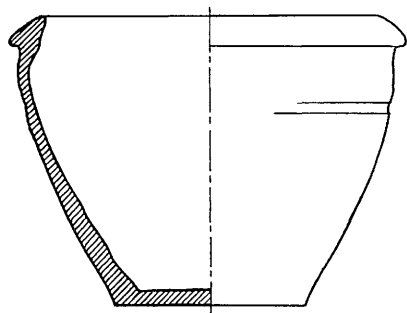
90 BOWL

D 18.2, H 11.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

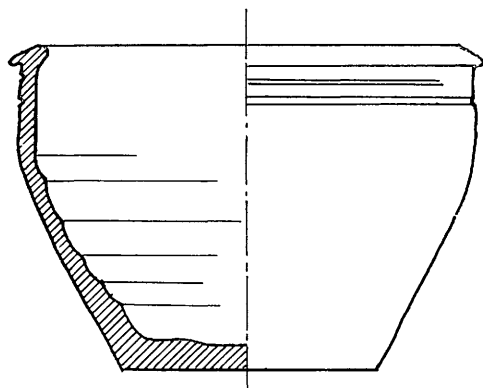


1:3

Reddish core, greenish surface. Projecting downturned rim. Sides taper to narrow rounded bottom. Flat base. Decoration of circumscribing grooves just above midpoint. Many bowls of this general shape were made in Nishapur in the tenth century. Some have slightly concave sides, some taper even more toward the base after the fashion of 93. Some have grooves immediately below the sloping lip.



1:3



1:3

91 JAR

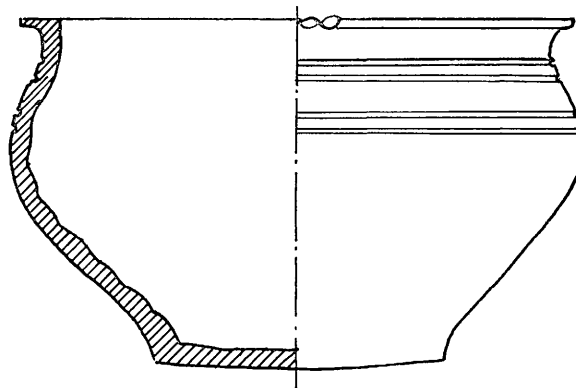
H 12.8, W 13.8 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

High shoulder tapering sharply to small foot. Vertical neck, slightly projecting lip. Decoration of circumscribing grooves on shoulder. Small jars of this shape were often given a lead glaze, brown or green (Group 9, 10) or an alkaline glaze (no example illustrated).

92 COOKING POT

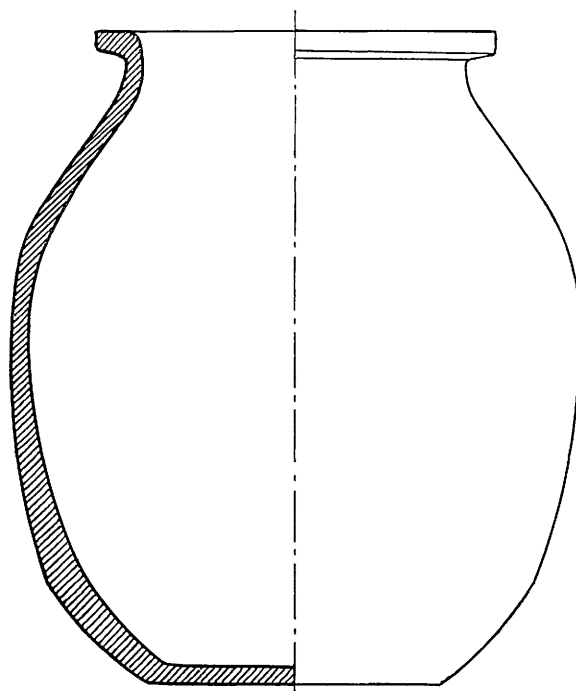
H 12.4, W 13.4 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.220

Buff clay containing black grit. Flat base, round belly, short wide neck, thick, flat rim marked here and there with a horizontal groove. Two faint grooves encircle the belly. A type of vessel much used in the ninth and tenth centuries. Among several variations, one was provided

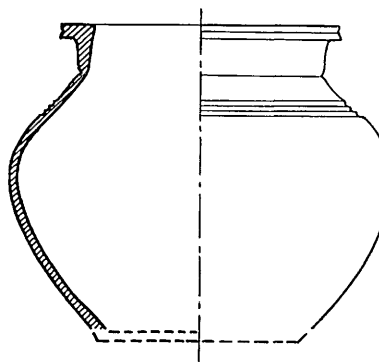


1:3

with a twisted decoration on the lip. Others are more elongated in form but have the same characteristic flat base, for example, one from Sabz Pushan. Another from Sabz Pushan had a stepped shoulder. Still another form is elon-

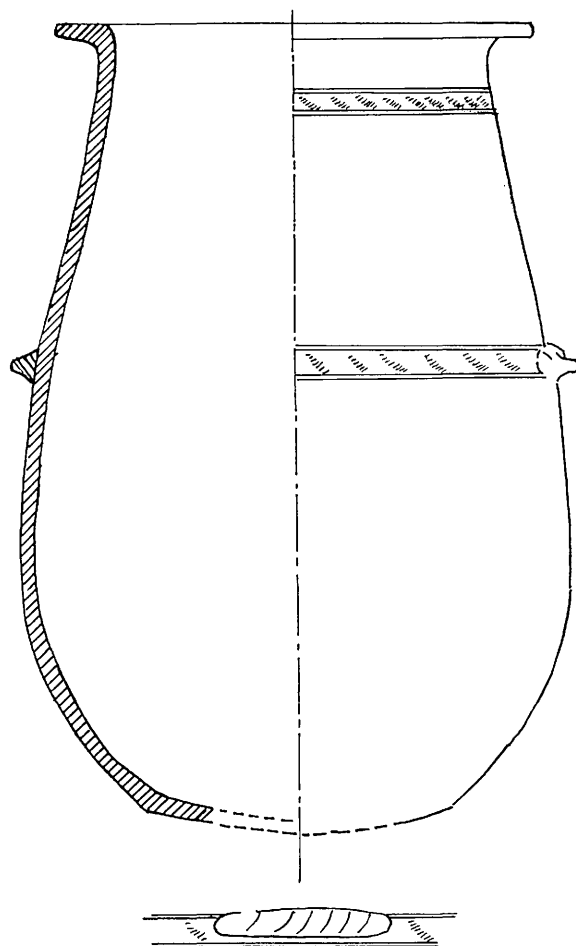


1:3



1:3

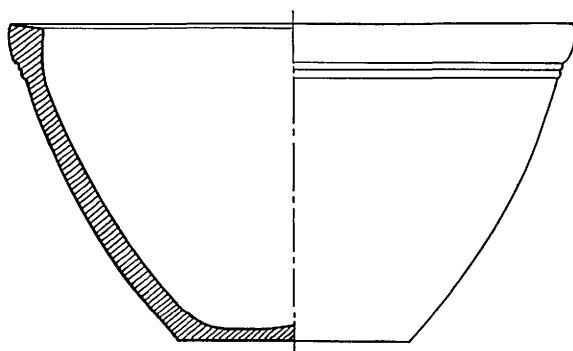
gated to the point of resembling a situla; this vessel has a convex base, a wide rim, and two lug handles connected with a band of incised decoration:



93 BOWL

D 18.5, H 11 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Red core, greenish surface. Sides taper with slight convexity to flat base. Rim projects deeply inward, sloping down. A common ninth-century type. The deep, wide groove on the outside wall, an unusual feature, probably served as an aid in lifting, substituting for the more usual projecting lip present on 90 and in a variation, also from Sabz Pushan:



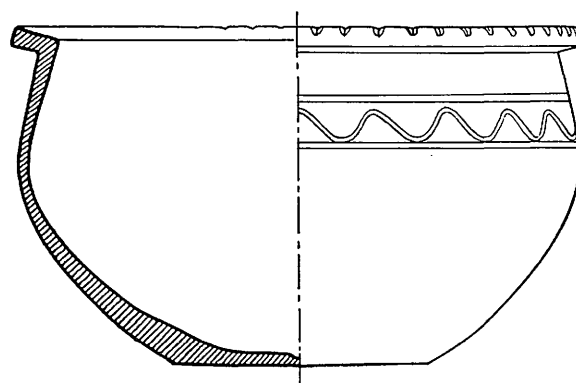
1:3

94 COOKING POT

H 19.7, D 21.7 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

1:3

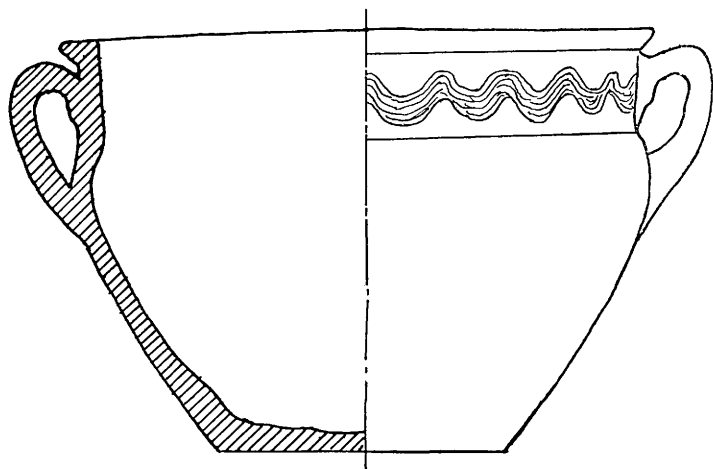
Gritty clay with grayish surface. Bottom blackened by use. Globular body with thick projecting lip, affording grip for lifting. Probably ninth century. The shape and lip were common in the Sasanian period, as confirmed by the Metropolitan's finds at Qasr-i-abu Nasr, and they continued for centuries thereafter. Another type of cooking vessel, later than ninth century, has a much wider top with unsloping lip. An example from Tepe Alp Arslan had the lip decorated with notches and a wavy band between two horizontal grooves at the shoulder:



1:3

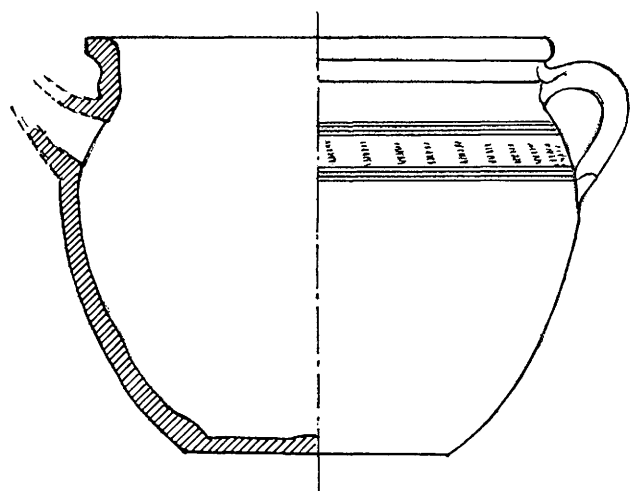
95 TWO-HANDLED POT

H 19.8, W 28.1 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB



1:3

Reddish core, buff surface. High shoulder with strong taper to base. Wide, short, concave neck, projecting rim. Neck decorated with combed wavy band. Vessels of the same general shape were made without handles (67) and some, made with handles, were furnished on one side with a short round spout with a flat lip; an example from the Village Tepe is shown:

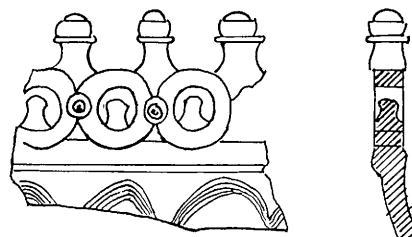


1:3

96 BOWL FRAGMENT (rim)

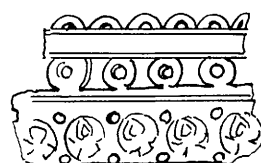
W 14.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.612

Reddish core, greenish buff surface. The rim, to which decorative knobs are added, projects slightly outward. Beneath it, between circumscribing grooves, is a band of incised V's. In shape the bowl was probably like 67 or 99. A fragment of a related bowl had a more elaborate addition on the rim; a series of rings standing on edge, each surmounted by a knob, with an additional knob at the junc-



1:3

tion of each pair of rings. Another had an openwork band of rings with a stamped decoration beneath (rather than incised decoration), the whole surmounted by a rim of



1:3

half-rings. Still another had a serrate rim, each triangle pierced by a triangular hole.

97 BOWL FRAGMENT (rim)

H 11.4 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.595

Another fragment of this vessel is in the Teheran museum. Hard gritty clay, warm gray core, pale neutral gray surface. Rim projects outward and slopes down. The band of decoration, appearing between two circumscribing grooves supplemented by wavy grooves, is made of an applied molded ornament, a fish, head up, tail down. Between the repetitions are double wavy lines made with a two-pointed tool. Unique in the pottery of Nishapur, this bowl resembles molded vessels found in Merv, where fish often appeared in the decoration of unglazed mold-made pottery (Pugachenkova, *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*, 2, 1958, pp. 78-91, fig. 8, nos. 1-3; Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 308, fig. 51, top, p. 309, fig. 52). 97 was probably imported from Merv.

98 JAR FRAGMENT (rim)

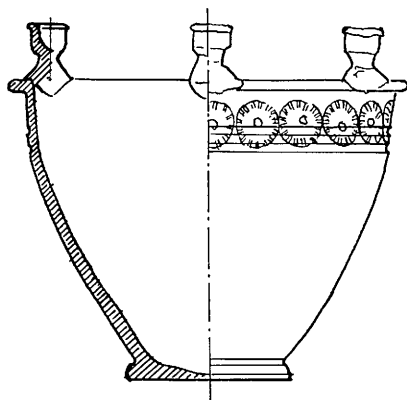
W 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.611

Another fragment of this vessel is in the Teheran museum. Reddish core, greenish buff surface. Rim projects outward and slopes down. Decoration, arranged in horizontal bands, made by indenting, gouging, cutting, scratching, and pricking. At the top, two rows of square indentations.

Beneath this, a band of contiguous X's, made by gouging ellipses from the surface and cutting triangles from the areas between them. Next, a plain band and a third row of square indentations. Beneath this, a wide inscribed braid with a pricked background. Such braids (see also 43) were popular in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

99 FLOWERPOT

H 14.4, D 16.9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB



1:3

Greenish surface. Wide top with sides tapering to a comparatively small bottom and slightly flaring foot. Flat base. Bottom has a circular drain hole. The projecting rim was once ornamented with six hollow-top knobs (compare 96). Beneath the rim, superimposed on two circumscribing grooves, are rosettes consisting of indentations made by a blunt point. Found in an upper-level well datable to the eleventh or twelfth century. A glazed flowerpot of the same general shape was also found (Group 9, 36).

100 FRAGMENT

W 10.6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Decoration in horizontal bands. The X-like ornament at the top made by the method described at 98. Beneath this, a band with dotted center line, probably made with a roulette. Next, a large foliate design incised on a pricked ground. This last is undoubtedly related to designs on seventh- or eighth-century metalwork (Smirnov, *Argenterie orientale*, pl. LXV, no. 110). Found in the same well as 99.

101 JAR FRAGMENT (rim)

H 14.3 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Reddish core, buff surface. Rim projects outward. The ornament at the top is defined by means of ellipses and triangles cut from the clay; the remaining surfaces are

decorated with small indentations, perhaps made with a roulette. Beneath this, a line of vertical ovals formed of small indentations, apparently stamped. Next, a wavy combed band between two horizontal grooves.

102 OBJECT OF UNKNOWN USE

H 17.6, W 18.4 cm ; kiln at South Horn
MMA 36.20.44

Reddish surface. Flat base, vertical sides, thick outcurving lip. Five rows of small indentations, possibly made with a roulette, encircle the piece—one near the base, three on the upper half of the body, one on the outer surface of the lip. The inner surface of the lip is heavily grooved. On one side of the vessel a wide vertical slot has been cut almost to the bottom. A flowerpotlike hole pierces the bottom. At the base, beneath the slot, there is a circular depression. A unique piece, discovered in a potter's workshop.

103 WATER BOTTLE

W 24.8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
Discarded

Reddish core, buff surface. Probably similar in shape to 106. At the center of the domed top, a double-grooved circle. From this, three double-outlined bands radiate. A poorly drawn cable design is incised within them. A second double-grooved circle appears at the shoulder. Probably late tenth century.

104 STORAGE JAR FRAGMENT (neck)

W 20 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.453

Reddish core, light greenish gray surface. The incised decoration on the neck consists of outlined Kufic letters, most of them containing hatching, and a clumsily drawn undulating stem with leaves emerging top and bottom. The letters appear both below and above the stem; some of the upper letters are written horizontally, some vertically. On the shoulder is an incised Kufic inscription reading *al-salam* (peace), an area containing indented dots and triangles, and larger triangles formed by V-shaped grooves. Late tenth century.

105 STORAGE JAR FRAGMENT

W 17.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.454

Buff surface, inside and outside. Decoration, crudely done, consists of combed horizontal lines enclosing a wavy line with pricking on either side of it, some horizontal lines of indentations, and holes placed singly and in threes, made with a pointed tool. Supplementing this, stamped disks of clay, alternately large and small, have

been affixed around the shoulder. The decoration on the larger disk consists essentially of rings of various sizes, on the smaller, a five-pointed star. The addition to pottery of such plaques was an ancient practice, known in Iraq in the Parthian period and even earlier.

106 a,b WATER BOTTLE

H 18.4, W 21.6 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 38.40.146

Greenish surface. The upper portion of the vessel, made in a mold, has a central medallion containing the head of *senmurv*, the mythological creature so popular in the Sasanian period. (The head, with pricked-up ears, is best seen when the illustration is turned so that the vessel's spout points to the right.) The medallion is encircled by a band of stars, a band of radial strokes, a broad band of lozenges, and a double groove. Probably twelfth or thirteenth century.

107 JAR FRAGMENT

W 16 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.452

Reddish core, greenish buff surface. The pattern in the top register, consisting of pseudo Kufic with foliations, was incised with a blunt point. So, too, were the two large guilloches farther down. The three small guilloches that alternate with the larger elements were made with a die whose imperfections regularly recur. See also 108.

108 JAR FRAGMENT

W 18.4 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

A second fragment of the jar represented by 107. One of the large guilloches is repeated. The other bands, incised with a round point, contain hatched triangles, a chain pattern of half-circles, half-leaves arranged in a wavelike fashion, and horizontal lyre shapes with crosshatched centers. Alternating with these elements are six of the die-stamped guilloches seen on 107. Hatched triangles resembling those of 108 appear in fragments of unglazed ware from Afrasiyab in the State Museum of Oriental Folk Art, Moscow.

109 BOTTLE

H 9.8 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.235

High-fired, very hard, nonporous clay, dark gray surface. Rounded, slightly pointed base. Sides taper up to narrow neck and rounded top; neck grooved just beneath the top. No decoration. One of many such bottles found in the area of a kiln that evidently produced them. For comment on the

probable purpose of this vessel and others like it (110–117), pages 293–294.

110 BOTTLE

H 11.75 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MIB

Greenish black surface. Sphero-conical shape, rounded top, groove around neck. Four pairs of vertical grooves are evenly spaced around the body. Between them, a die-stamped lozenge filled with a cruciform design tipped with fleurs-de-lys. At the corners of the lozenge is added a round depression made with a point.

111 BOTTLE

H 10.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.233

Greenish black surface. Sphero-conical shape, rounded top, deep groove around neck. Circumscribing grooves at shoulder and belly. Superimposed on them, descending from the shoulder, some freely incised forms. A related bottle with similar grooves lacks the additional forms. A fragment of a somewhat similar bottle found at Shahr-i-Daqianus (Stein, *Archaeological Reconnaissances*, pl. xxii, no. 241) has such grooves and freely drawn forms and, in addition, some incised circles.

112 BOTTLE (top and half of body missing)

H 11.3 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.240

Hard reddish clay covered with buff slip. Wall about one and one-half centimeters thick, the usual measure for such vessels. A slight blunt projection at the base. On the sides, deep vertical gouges alternate with applied lengths of herringbone. Traces remain of an additional painted decoration: vertical red stripes with black outlines, converging toward the base. A bottle of somewhat similar shape decorated with applied lengths of crosshatching was found at Dvin, Russian Armenia, where large numbers of these bottles were made (Dzhanpoladian, *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*, 1, 1958, p. 203, fig. 2, no. 16).

113 BOTTLE

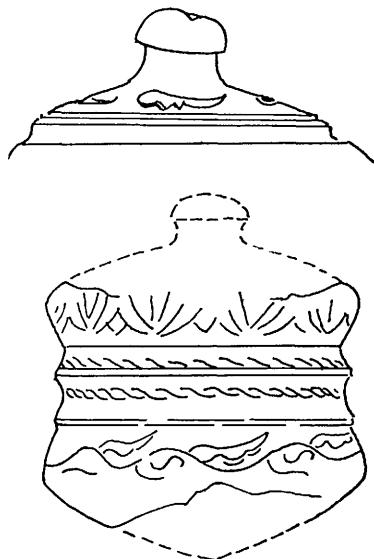
H 12 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.278

Hard clay, dark grayish surface. Sphero-conical shape. The nipplelike top lacks an encircling groove. Three circumscribing rings on the shoulder. Otherwise, no decoration. The absence of the groove at the neck, rare in Nishapur, is not unknown in vessels of this sort from other sites.

114 BOTTLE (waster)

H 11.8 cm ; kiln at Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.237

Greenish black surface. A variation in shape, in that the central part of the body has nearly vertical sides. The piece was damaged in the kiln, the top bent to one side, the shoulder adhering to another vessel. A great many wasters, found on the surface, marked the site of the kiln.



1:3

Two examples of the general shape of 114, with waisted bodies and incised decoration, were found at Sabz Pushan.

115 BOTTLE (neck and top missing)

H 15.2 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.241

Nearly black clay with light surface. Spalling has occurred, suggesting that the piece was covered with slip, but the effect may simply be the result of lavish use of water during manufacture. Mold-made. Shaped to represent a fish, with four "fins" projecting from the sides and the base bifurcated to imitate a tail. Despite this base, the bottle rests in the characteristic position of such vessels, with its orifice pointed upward. The neck seems to have been grooved in the usual manner. Shallow grooves circumscribe the shoulder and belly. The band between them is adorned with a zigzag made with a roulette; in its triangular spaces are small triangular indentations. The lower half of the body is covered with stamped circles made of dots. The "fins" are adorned with a herringbone of dotted lines.

Bottles in the form of fish have also been found in Afrasiyab (Kostalsky Collection, Hermitage Museum) and in Akhsyket, Uzbekistan (Dzhanpoladian, *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*, 1, 1958, pp. 201–213, fig. 6).

116 BOTTLE

H 14.6 cm ; North Horn
MMA 38.40.277

Dull reddish core, greenish gray surface. Deep groove around neck, clearly defined shoulder. Base protrudes like a knob. Die-stamped decoration on sides, arranged in six vertical bands. Three of these contain a length of rosettes consisting of a disk surrounded by spots—all impressed by a single long die. This pattern is bordered on either side by a unit of concentric circles, made with repeated impressions of a small die. The alternate bands consist of a guilloche flanked by plain circular depressions. Beneath this is a stamped circular design, divided into quadrants by two notched V's. Two of the quadrants are filled with a circular spot; the opposed quadrants contain a V.

117 BOTTLE

H 15 cm ; kiln at Qanat Tepe
MIB

Dull reddish clay, greenish gray surface. Rounded bottom without point. Upper half of body slightly concave. Narrow shoulder, neck formed by deep groove. Two circumscribing lines just below the shoulder, a projecting ridge near the midpoint, and two more lines beneath this. Other bottles of this shape with the lines but without the ridge were found in the same location.

118 COIN BANK

H 5.6 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.228

Greenish surface. A simple, undecorated spherical vessel furnished with a small flat base and a slit for coins on the top. Several such banks were found.

119 TOY HEN

H 2.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.206

Greenish buff surface. There are three legs, one at the front, two at the back.

120 TOY (?) FRAGMENT

H 2.5 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Greenish buff surface. The head of an elephant (?), perhaps part of a toy, perhaps part of an applied decoration on a vessel. A small ivory elephant was found in the same site, and elsewhere in Nishapur a stone lamp in the form of an elephant was found.

121 DISH

D 5.3, H 3.3 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.227

Greenish surface. Flat base, flat rim. No decoration. Perhaps a toy, perhaps not. Such small pieces were produced in considerable number (131–133).

122 WHISTLE

H 6, L 9 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.116

Reddish clay, buff surface. In the form of an animal with curled horns flat on head. Forelegs but no hind legs. Bifurcated tail forms mouthpiece. Whistle vent beneath body, fingerhole on either side of body.

123 TOY PITCHER

H 5.7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.50

Greenish gray surface. Rounded base with three feet, sides tapering directly to (missing) lip. This shape does not occur in pitchers of the usual size.

124 TOY PITCHER

H 3.7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Greenish surface. Clearly defined foot, low, wide body, tall flaring neck, thumbknob on handle. A rosette of simple petals is imprinted on the base. This shape of pitcher occurs in the usual size (32).

125 ANIMAL-HEAD PITCHER SPOUT

H 4.5 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

The pouring hole opens at the mouth. Date uncertain. Similar heads occur in the buff ware (Group 1, 72) and monochrome ware (Group 9, 1). Comment on animal-head vessels from elsewhere than Nishapur appears at the buff ware example.

126 MONKEY HEAD

H 3.7 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 40.170.162

Reddish clay. A toy or an ornament. Date uncertain.

127 ANIMAL HEAD

H 5.8 cm ; South Horn
MMA 40.170.165

Buff clay, greenish surface. Once projected as an ornament from the side of a molded pitcher or jar. Probably late twelfth or early thirteenth century.

128 TOY PITCHER (tip of spout missing)

H 7.5 cm ; Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Greenish gray surface. The globular body, projecting collar, and flaring neck are typical of ninth-century pitchers of the usual size (8). The neck is relatively taller than usual, however, and the larger vessels were not made with spouts.

129 TOY PITCHER

H 7 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 39.40.88

Greenish gray surface. Vessel somewhat squat, with high, wide neck and raised foot. The shape suggests late tenth or early eleventh century.

130 TOY HORSE (forefeet restored)

L 11 cm ; Sabz Pushan (surface find)
MMA 38.40.102

Greenish surface. Simply modeled, but with the mane well developed and the legs extended. Saddle formed from two added pieces of clay. Probably once provided with a rider. A surface find, of uncertain date. Such pieces have long been favored in the Near East and are still made today in many places.

131 JAR

H 5.7 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.209

Reddish clay, exterior surface red and green in patches. Flat base. Sides flare to prominent shoulder. Lip extends laterally over groove that forms the neck. Probably tenth century. Vessels of this shape and small size were manufactured in quantity. Some were glazed, usually in plain colors. Quite possibly they were used as lamps.

132 JAR

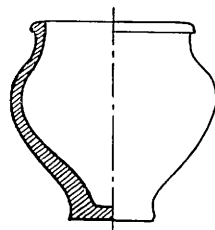
H 8.1 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 38.40.302

Red clay, greenish surface. More carefully made than most such small vessels. The barrel-shaped body tapers to a flat base. Near the top, two circumscribing lines, a

rounded ridge above them. Short neck, outcurved lip. Late tenth century.

133 JAR

H 6.6 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB



1:3

Barrel-shaped body, flat base, short neck, everted lip. Tenth or eleventh century. Small jars like this were quite common, with slight variations in shape of body and lip. They were probably not toys.

134 TOY PITCHER

H 10.9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.222

Greenish surface. A diminutive version of 19, the shoulder marked by a sharp change of angle. Flat base. Finger-made grooves on the narrow flaring neck.

135 TOY PITCHER

H 10.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.193

Buff clay, greenish surface. Comparable in shape to 134, but better made. Flat base, rounded shoulder, flaring neck with very thin lip. For no known reason, the toys, unlike the full-size versions, were often furnished with spouts.

136 TOY PITCHER

H 12.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Warm gray surface. The ridged neck relatively taller than usual in Nishapur pitchers. Lip slightly everted. Well-defined foot.

137 FRAGMENT OF HEMISPHERICAL MOLD

W 9 cm ; kiln at South Horn
MIB

Buff clay. Part of a mold for unglazed pottery, probably for the lower half of a pitcher such as 163 or 166. Such molds were thrown on the wheel like any thick-walled bowl, then stamped with patterns, hardened in the sun, and fired. For a complete example, see 143a. Near the

rim of 137 is a band filled with a square of four adjoined curls. The die producing this unit was impressed repeatedly to make the band. Beneath it are vertical rectangular panels, also stamped by a single die, containing a scroll-like decoration.

138 FRAGMENT OF HEMISPHERICAL MOLD

W 6 cm ; kiln at South Horn
MIB

Buff clay. At the rim, between two horizontal grooves, a die-stamped unit of overlapping triple circles alternating with two pricked dots. Beneath, a zigzag formed of a hatched line between two straight lines, the triangular spaces above and below filled with impressed circles.

139 FRAGMENT OF HEMISPHERICAL MOLD

W 11 cm ; kiln at South Horn
MIB

Buff clay. Design formed from repeated stampings of two dies. The upper one, square, produced two interlocked links; the lower one, elongated, a vertical guilloche. Bands of the interlocked links, used in various combinations, also occur on 157, 161, 163, 170, 177, 181, 182. They are also found on the similar ware of Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 306, fig. 50, upper left; p. 339, fig. 70, upper).

140 FRAGMENT OF HEMISPHERICAL MOLD

W 7 cm ; kiln at South Horn
MIB

Pinkish clay. Die-stamped decoration. Upper row, small ducks. Center row, owls, a circular ornament between them. Lower row, a vertical biconvex form adorned with a circular ornament with featherlike projections above and below.

141 FRAGMENT OF ONE-PIECE MOLD

H 8.7 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MMA 40.170.300

Poorly cleaned, strongly reddish clay, yellowish green surface. Bottom of the mold, which has a flat base, is unpierced and undecorated. The design, filling a broad band on the wall, is dominated by large circles whose wide rims are die-stamped repetitions of a doubly encircled star. The center areas of the circle are filled with cross-hatching containing dots. The areas between the circles are filled with a scalelike motif, each scale bearing a tiny circle.

142 MOLD FRAGMENT

W 12.2 cm ; Falaki (surface find)
MIB

Smooth reddish clay. In the center is a figure composed of four petals or hearts, each with a circular excrescence on its outer edge. The petals, adorned with tiny stamped stars, are separated by four stamped leafy stems that make a cross. The design is surmounted by a fleur-de-lys. At the left, a zigzag of leafy stems, made by the same die used for the cross, the spaces on one side filled with stamped triangles, on the other with stamped quatrefoils. At the right, a curved stem with many excrescences. Pricked ground at the right and in the center. Perhaps eleventh or twelfth century. The patterns are unlike those on the molds found at the South Horn (137–140), even though the two locations are not far apart. No evidence of kilns was found at Falaki. The curved stem on this fragment is reminiscent of pottery designs at Merv (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 234, fig. 9, top).

143 a HEMISPHERICAL MOLD

H 7.5, D 17.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 39.40.39
143b Modern cast

Reddish clay, greenish surface. Die-stamped decoration in three bands. In the top band, "sunbursts"—small circles made of radiating strokes, producing a motif with a depressed center. In the center band, quadrangular groups of four pear shapes, two pointing up, two down. Tiny rings are stamped beside and between these shapes. Between the units of pear shapes, a vertical band of braid. In the bottom band, a fleur-de-lys-like ornament. Found at a high level near a prayer hall, unaccountably far from any known potter's shop. Probably twelfth century. Sunbursts like those of the upper band occur in the unglazed pottery of Samarra (*Excavations at Samarra, 1936–1939*, II, pl. xxxvi, no. 9).

144 DIE

H 2.75 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.416

Rosette design made of lines and pricking. Elaborate patterns were made in molds with such units. For a pitcher ornamented with rosettes from a similar die, 187.

145 FRAGMENT

W 5.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Reddish clay, buff surface. Mold-made. The circular opening at the top of the vessel is edged with a zigzag band. Beneath this, in a band defined by two lines of dotting, a pseudo-Kufic inscription written with a dotted

line. Beneath this, a row of crosshatched triangles with fringed borders. Another fragment of this vessel was found half a mile distant from 145, in the Village Tepe, in the remains of a large house or palace. The second piece indicated that the vessel had vertical sides beginning immediately below the triangles seen here. Date uncertain.

146 FRAGMENT

W 4.5 cm ; Vineyard Tepe
MIB

Brownish clay, buff surface. Mold-made. Contour suggests that the original shape was pyramidal. Decoration made up of curling stems, rosettes, bunches of grapes (?), and a zigzag. The dividing lines are formed of a miniature herringbone. Probably ninth century. Herringbone lines, also to be seen on 148 and 151, occur on some of the unglazed molded ware of Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, p. 14, fig. 41).

147 DISH FRAGMENTS (base)

H 5.1 cm ; Qanat Tepe
Left: MMA 40.170.586
Right: MIB

Gritty clay, buff on inside surface, greenish on outside (illustrated). Mold-made. Both the mold and clay were used very wet, for which reason the relief decoration has a different consistency from the body, and some of it has broken off. Decoration in concentric circles. Innermost circle filled with double concentric circles with small, pricked bosses between them—a small version of the "sunburst" motif on 143. Then, in sequence, a band of small, narrow herringbone lines, side by side, a band of pyramidal bunches of "grapes" with pricked centers, and a band of palmettelike forms, with one of the small bosses of the innermost band repeated at their bases. On the vertical wall of the dish is a decoration of arches formed by a herringbone line, enclosing circles placed above leaves. Ninth century. The herringbone lines of the second band occur on some of the unglazed molded pottery of Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, fig. 43).

148 PITCHER FRAGMENT

H 13.6 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Mold-made. The decoration, crudely drawn in the mold, consists mainly of pointed arches outlined in herringbone and filled with a column of lozenges and borders of contiguous semicircles. An area filled with a scalelike pattern of semicircles occurs around the loop handle. There may have been a second handle opposite the remaining one. Date uncertain.

149 DISH FRAGMENT

H 5.1 cm ; Qanat Tepe
MIB

Part of a low, vertical-sided dish, in shape like 150. Mold-made. Decoration: at the top, a row of pointed arches drawn in double-outlined curves. Within each arch is a "sunburst," a version of a motif seen on 143 and other examples. Below a double horizontal line are the tops of rounded arches or circles. Between them is a vertical lug, applied after the vessel was removed from the mold. Probably ninth century. The added lugs (see also 150) were probably an imitation of metalwork. Tear-shaped lugs were common in metalwork of the Parthian period. Much later, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, they were a characteristic decoration of Iranian bronze mortars.

150 DISH FRAGMENT

W 7 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Reddish clay. Mold-made. Decoration in four registers separated by horizontal lines. At top, poorly impressed, a repeated form, apparently a palmette, alternating with a group of two rosettes with stalklike projections above. Second register, rosettes with semicircular curves above them, alternating with a small ring above a boss. Third register, rosettes and lozenges. Bottom register, poorly impressed, a quatrefoil growing out of a small circle. For comment on the added lugs, see 149.

151 FRAGMENT

H 6.1 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.587

Reddish clay, greenish surface. Piece is curved, original shape hemispherical. Decoration has spalled, explanation for this at 147. At top, a flowering plant of symmetrical shape enclosed in a herringbone zigzag. Beneath this, a band of rosettes between two herringbone lines. In Teheran is a fragment, presumably part of this vessel, decorated with a wide crosshatch of herringbone lines, the lozenges filled with a small trefoil. A very similar ware, dated to the eighth or ninth century, was discovered at Merv (Zaurova, *Trudy*, XI, p. 210, fig. 26).

152 DISH FRAGMENT (base)

W 7.4 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 39.40.14

Core and surface pinkish buff. Mold-made. Decoration in concentric bands defined by rings. Center filled with a circle of rings and a circle of sunbursts (for comment on latter motif, see 143). Proceeding outward, a ring of cowrie shells end to end, a ring of sunbursts, a ring of square quatrefoils, a ring of eight-petaled rosettes, another ring

of cowrie shells, and finally another ring of quatrefoils. The vertical side of the dish (not illustrated) has a herringbone zigzag like that seen on 151, with a circular blob added at the junctions, and a band of cowrie shells stamped side by side.

153 DISH FRAGMENT (base)

W 11.2 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Reddish buff surface. Mold-made. Decoration in concentric circles defined by rings. At center, an eight-petaled rosette. Proceeding outward, a band of circular "blossoms"; a band of pear-shaped motifs in semicircular curves, alternating with a small boss and a small ring (compare 150); a band of heart shapes with a small projection in the V; a band of herringbone lines side by side (compare 147), broken at wide intervals by a square quatrefoil (compare bands of such quatrefoils in 152); a band of herringboned biconvex forms side by side; and a band of double concentric circles. On the vertical wall (not illustrated), double semicircles containing a rosette. Probably ninth century. The herringboned biconvex forms of the next to last band occur on a mold-made dish from Samarra (*Excavations at Samarra, 1936-1939*, II, pl. xxxvi, bottom figure), and the double concentric rings of the last band are of a type to be seen on yellow and green lustered dishes found in Susa (Koechlin, *Les Céramiques*, pl. xx, nos. 137, 140). A cover with similar design to 153 is in the Nelson Gallery, Kansas City (Pope, *Survey*, IV, pl. 195 A).

154 THREE-FOOTED DISH (restored)

D 16.5, H 4.5 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 38.40.224

Greenish surface. Mold-made. Flat bottom, nearly vertical collar, flat rim. Decoration: an assembly of triangles forming a large star, each triangle containing a large double ring and three small rings; the six spaces outside the star each contain a semicircle. Date uncertain.

155 PITCHER FRAGMENT

H 10.6, W 14.1 cm ; kiln at South Horn
MIB

Buff clay. The two hemispheres made in different molds, then joined. The upper portion is encircled by a broad band of braid, its two strands having raised outlines. Above this, at the collar, a series of ducks. The lower portion is decorated with a broad band of vertical double lines. The raised-outline treatment, resulting either from line drawing or line stamping in the mold, also occurs on 164, 168, 182, 186.

156 a,b PITCHER FRAGMENT

H 8.1, D 12.5 cm ; Village Tepe
MMA 40.170.653



1:2

Greenish surface. Mold-made, two hemispheres joined. On the upper portion two men in boots and long coats stand face to face. Superimposed on their coats are the legs of women (?) who are being held in the air. Behind the man on the right is a ewer, behind the man on the left a dish of pyramided fruit. Beyond the latter, the remains of a circular band of Kufic inscription. The same type of Kufic fills the interlaced bands that decorate the lower hemisphere, the message consisting of benedictions, including *barakeh li sahibi* (blessing on the owner). In the spaces between the interlaced bands are pear shapes. The base (156b) is decorated with a six-petaled rosette with two curls, back to back, between the petals. No other pitcher was found in this ware or any other with a decorated base, for which reason this must be considered an import. Probably eleventh or twelfth century.

Interlacing bands of inscription were common as a pottery decoration from the eleventh to the thirteenth century. They appear on some of the Egyptian luster ware produced by the workshop of a Muslim during the first half of the eleventh century (Bahgat & Massoul, *Céramique musulmane*, pl. xiv, no. 5, pl. xvii, no. 2, pl. xx, no. 1). Pottery of the same general type was found in Shahr-i-Daqianus (Stein, *Archaeological Reconnaissances*, pl. xxiii, fig. on right). In Iranian luster ware of the thirteenth century the inscriptions are no longer in Kufic but in the cursive script known as Naskhi (Pope, *Survey*, V, pl. 718 B). The bands are also to be found in architectural decoration: in Iran of the early twelfth century at Masjid-i-Haydaria, Qazvin (ibid., pl. 512 D and, more spectacularly, in Afghanistan on the minaret at Jam (Maricq, *Illustrated London News*, January 10, 1959, pp. 56, 57).

157 FRAGMENT

H 3.5, D 10 cm ; kiln at South Horn
MMA 36.20.15

Buff clay. Mold-made. Decoration in four encircling bands. At the rim, a border of crescents made with two dies. Below this, repeated, a lozenge with a depressed center, a superior "circumflex," and a tail curved to one side, alternating with a large raised dot. Next, a band of a palmette enclosed in a heart, alternating with a small palmette. The lowest band contains repetitions of two interlocked links.

158 FRAGMENT

D 10 cm ; kiln at South Horn
MIB

Greenish buff surface. Mold-made. Perhaps the top of a water bottle, shaped something like 106. Decoration in concentric bands separated by raised rings. In the center, a rosette. Then, in sequence, bosses with pierced centers, fanlike forms with two dots between them, palmettes, and a border band in which three elements are spaced on a ground of raised dots: a miniature palm tree, a rosette of eight petals, some of its petals hatched, the rest pricked with a single dot, and a short vertical stem with a crude trefoil at either end.

159 PEDESTALED DISH

H 11.6 cm ; near Tepe Alp Arslan
MIB

Buff clay. Mold-made. Upper square, vertical-sided portion projects over lower hemispherical portion, which is furnished with a hollow foot. (For the type of mold probably used, see Group 11, 68.) The rim projects in scallops. Two of the vertical sides are decorated with a panel of small X's, the other two with a zigzag whose spaces are filled with lozenges. All the panels have side borders of semicircles. The hemispherical portion, bordered at the top with semicircles, is filled with downward-pointing palmettes in heart shapes. This motif, inherited from the Sasanian period, became very popular in various media in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and the vessel can be ascribed to this period. The motif is also found in the black on white ware (Group 3, 77).

160 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 10.4 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

Buff body, greenish surface. The two hemispheres made in different molds, then joined. Shape is that of a one-handled pitcher. Body almost spherical. Wide mouth, neck slightly concave, with plain narrow collar. Three bands of decoration. The top one, filled with foliated

Kufic, contains the words *barakeh we . . . lisahibihi* (blessing and . . . to its owner). The other two are filled with floral forms and rosettes contained within encircling stems. Not a typical Nishapur piece. Probably eleventh or twelfth century.

161 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 14.5 cm ; kiln at South Horn
MIB

Buff clay. Made in two flattened hemispherical molds. Decoration, beginning at the top, consists of a narrow band of rosettes in circles, a narrow band of spadelike shapes containing palmettes, a wide band containing an inscription in Naskhi against a dotted ground, a band of rosettes (largely obliterated in the joining of the two parts of the body), a band of interlocked links (see comment at 139), and at the bottom a band of circular medallions. The dotting in the band of Naskhi was obviously added to prevent the cursive script from looking weak in company with the more densely patterned areas.

162 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 16.3 cm ; kiln at South Horn
MIB

Buff clay. Made in two flattened hemispherical molds. The remains of the lower attachment of the handle are visible on the junction of the halves. The upper portion, like that of 161, bears a Naskhi inscription, but here the ground is filled with small stars instead of dots. A narrower band of decoration beneath this was obliterated by the potter. The lower hemisphere is decorated with downward-pointing pear shapes containing a stem with five leaves, a row of line-enclosed palmettes pointing up between them, some small rings added irregularly, and a band of short vertical lines. There is a close relationship between the design of the lower part of this pitcher and a fragment of molded pottery of the twelfth or thirteenth century found at Merv (Pugachenkova, *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*, 2, 1958, pp. 78–91, fig. 10, no. 1).

163 PITCHER (neck and handle restored)

H 16.5, W 14.6 cm ; kiln at South Horn
MMA 36.20.25

Buff clay. Made in two hemispherical molds. The original neck was undecorated. The handle attaches rather high on the upper half of the body. The high foot is typical. Four bands of interlocked links (see comment at 139) encircle the body. On the upper half, between two of these bands, are three bands of a triangular form, alternately upright and inverted, composed of three "petals" and three small circles. The comparable area on the lower half contains vertical lengths of a simple braid. For

related braids, see 139, 143. The braid of 163 was found in other pieces from the same area. The same type was also used in Merv (Pugachenkova, *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*, 2, 1958, pp. 78–91, fig. 5).

164 PITCHER FRAGMENT

H 15.8, W 16.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Buff clay. Made in two molds. Prominent on the upper portion is a domed structure supported by nine columns. This alternates with a large rosette, above which are two small rosettes. The flat surfaces in relief are decorated with crosshatching in low relief. The depressed areas between the columns and within the petals of the large rosette are adorned with a single line of V's. Above this, close to the neck, a band filled with notched lines in relief. On the lower portion of the body is a crosshatched "pine-cone" with half-leaves hanging from stems on either side. This decoration is drawn in raised outline on a hatched ground. Neither in composition nor detail is this design typical of Nishapur. Probably an import. Perhaps eleventh century.

165 PITCHER (most of neck restored)

H 17, W 16 cm ; kiln at South Horn
MMA 36.20.8

Greenish gray surface. Made in two molds of unequal measure; greatest width low on body. High foot. Flaring neck with convex profile; a groove near the lip. At the top of the body, a band of downward-pointing lotus like forms alternating with stars, both motifs common in this ware. Next, the principal band, an inscription in Naskhi reading *'izz we iqbal we salameh we sa'adet* (glory, prosperity, security, and happiness). Diacritical marks are present, though they are not easily distinguishable from the small rings that dot the ground. Beneath the inscription is a line of stars contained in swags. The lower portion of the body is decorated with vertical lengths of a large herringbone. The unglazed molded ware of Merv also employs rings as a background motif (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 339, fig. 70, upper), though less often than the Nishapur ware.

166 PITCHER (neck and handle restored)

H 17.4, W 16.3 cm ; kiln at South Horn
MMA 36.20.7

Buffish gray surface. Made in two molds. At the top of the upper portion, a band of the interlocked link motif (see comment at 139). Next, a band of a poorly impressed pear-shaped motif, with a dot filling the space between the upper points. The principal band contains three motifs on a dotted ground: a unit of concentric pear shapes, a bird in profile, and a bearded man sitting cross-legged.

The lower portion of the body, beneath a motif largely obliterated by the join, is decorated with vertical lengths of a scroll-like motif quite similar to that seen on 137. The style of the seated man suggests that the dies used to make molds for unglazed pottery were sometimes used, or sometimes resembled those used, in making the molds for alkaline-glazed vessels (Group 11, 55).

167 FRAGMENT

W 7.6 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MIB

Reddish core, buff surface. Mold-made. Guilloche similar to that on a mold from kiln at South Horn (139) but with the strands more closely knit. The motif, a popular one, generally appears on the lower portions of mold-made vessels. From the top level, probably twelfth century.

168 FRAGMENT

W 5.6 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MIB

Brownish core, greenish surface. Mold-made. Probably from near the neck of a pitcher. A band of rosettes and a running border of leaflike forms with raised outlines (comment on raised-outline technique at 155). Probably twelfth century.

169 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 6 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MIB

Greenish core and surface. Mold-made, from the area of the join. The upper (?) portion has a dotted ground, a treelike motif, and a medallion containing small rings. The lower (?) portion is decorated with small triangular motifs flanked by small rings. Probably twelfth century.

170 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 8.4 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MIB

Reddish core, buff surface. Mold-made. Bands of decoration separated by raised lines. Two are filled with a pointed palmette alternating with a pair of starlike bosses, the third filled with a version of the oft-seen interlocked link motif. Probably twelfth century.

171 FRAGMENT

W 5.6 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
Discarded

Reddish core, buff surface. Mold-made. A band containing lengths of guilloche side by side, with a small ring placed between the lower ends. Probably twelfth century.

172 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 10.4 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MIB

Buff body and surface. Mold-made. At the top, a series of notched lines, arranged diagonally (compare 176). Beneath, a band of triple, six-petaled rosettes (compare 176, figure at top) of a type not found in the pieces by the kiln at South Horn (137-140). Probably twelfth century.

173 PITCHER FRAGMENT (shoulder)

W 10.6 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MMA 40.170.438

Reddish core, buff surface. Mold-made. At the collar, a simple ring in relief. Next, a ring of rosettes, almost effaced. Next, two rings of sunbursts (for comment on these, 143). Below these, a ring of blurred rosettes (?) and a ring of birds, head to tail, with pricked decoration. Similar birds appear on 174 and 175. Probably twelfth century.

174 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 9.9 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MMA 40.170.602

Reddish core, buff surface. Mold-made. On the shoulder is a line of birds like those on 173. Beneath the join, the remains of a small repeated motif, a band filled with an undulating stem with curling extensions, and a band of a notched motif. Probably twelfth century.

175 FRAGMENT

W 10 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MIB

Reddish core, buff surface. Mold-made. The motif in the upper register consists of a pear shape around which are disposed four lotus forms alternating with a leaflike form. In the spaces between these motifs, stars. In the lower register, a procession of birds like those of 173 and 174. Probably twelfth century.

176 FRAGMENT

W 8.5 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MIB

Brownish core, buff surface. Mold-made. In the center, a large rosette in the style of the ones on 172. This is surrounded by a band of notched lines in a herringbone pattern (compare 172). Beneath this, a band with "seed-pods" side by side. Next, a band of small palmettes, then a band with the compound motif and stars seen on 175. It is not unlikely that 175 and 176 are fragments of vessels made in the same mold.

The herringbone pattern of notched lines also occurs in the molded, unglazed pottery of Samarra (Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, p. 14, fig. 43).

177 FRAGMENT

W 7 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MMA 40.170.601

Brownish core, greenish surface. Mold-made. In shape, slightly convex. Decoration in concentric bands around a central medallion containing a Solomon's seal enclosed in a guilloche: a line of dots between raised lines, small pointed palmettes, "fleurs-de-lys" in heart shapes, pointed palmettes linked at the base, alternating with a down-pointing triangular form at the top, and a band of the now-familiar interlocked link motif. A fragmentary circle at the edge contains dots. Probably twelfth century.

178 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 3.6 cm ; South Horn
MMA 36.20.24

Buff core, greenish surface. Mold-made. A winged lion in profile, head turned front, tail curving above his back. Background of dots.

179 FRAGMENT

W 4 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MMA 40.170.592

Buff clay. Mold-made. Decoration, flatly molded: a beardless male face with low forehead, slit eyes, and an urna, or tattoo mark, between the brows. A face with a comparable mark between the brows appears in the buff ware (Group 1, 59). Faces appear in the unglazed ware of Merv that do not closely resemble that of 179 but also have low foreheads, slit eyes, and are flatly molded (Lunina, *Trudy*, XI, p. 335, fig. 68, upper; p. 339, fig. 70).

180 FRAGMENT

H 6 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MMA 40.170.59

Greenish core and surface. Mold-made. At top and bottom, a band of the familiar interlocked link motif. Between these, a band of well-drawn Kufic letters. A portion of the background is left plain, a portion dotted.

181 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 7.5 cm ; Falaki
MMA 40.170.600

Buff core, greenish surface. Mold-made. At the neck, a band of the interlocked link motif. Beneath this, a band of pseudo-Kufic inscription composed of a pair of vertical

letters alternating with a heart-shaped form, the background filled with small rings. At the bottom of the fragment, another band of the interlocked link motif.

182 FRAGMENT

W 8.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Greenish core and surface. Mold-made. At top, a circle of stars. Next, a band of the interlocked link motif, followed by a band of simple six-petaled rosettes done in raised outline, placed between pairs of raised vertical lines. From a high level; twelfth century.

183 FRAGMENT

W 1.25 cm ; exact provenance unknown
MMA 40.170.593

Grayish buff core, greenish surface. Mold-made. A band of ducks enclosed in curving lines, ground filled with trifoliate forms and small rings. An exceptional piece of uncertain origin.

184 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 4.8 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Greenish core and surface. Mold-made. Triangles, lozenges, and overlapping pear shapes done in raised outline, with hatching; the hatching was perhaps added after the piece was removed from the mold. Perhaps eleventh century.

185 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 3.6 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.594

Another fragment of this pitcher is in Teheran. Greenish core and surface. Mold-made. A procession of ducks against a ground of stars. Beneath, a design of horizontal S-curves. Perhaps imported from Merv; the procession of birds recalls molded ware of Merv of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Pugachenkova, *Sovetskaya Arkheologiya*, 2, 1958, pp. 78-91, fig. 8, no. 5).

186 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 11.2 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Greenish core and surface. Mold-made. At the top, near the neck, a band of semicircular arches. Beneath this, a band of S-forms. Next, a band containing a pear shape alternating with a simple rosette, both done in raised outlines, the ground filled with tiny rings.

187 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 8 cm ; Bazaar Tepe
MIB

Red core, reddish surface. Mold-made. Three dies were used to stamp the design in the mold: a lotuslike form with triple-cusped lower end, a sunburst with hollow center, and a rosette. For a die that would have stamped such a rosette, see 144.

188 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 11.4 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.603

A portion of this fragment is in the Teheran museum. Greenish core and surface. Mold-made. The principal feature of the decoration, a motif resembling four bound bundles of sticks arranged to form a cross, is of unknown significance. The double-knotted form between the crosses is a typical twelfth-century motif. The ground is filled with small rings.

189 PITCHER FRAGMENT

W 15 cm ; Sabz Pushan
MIB

Reddish core, greenish surface. Made in two hemispherical molds. The upper portion is decorated with a unit of four "leaves" in a cross with a double circle at the center. The leaves are hatched on either side of a center line. The background is filled with a pattern of rings contained within shapes that fit the contours of the leaves, more or less after the fashion of the decorated compartments seen in the polychrome on white ware, slip-painted ware with colored engobe, and ware decorated with yellow-staining black. Below the wide join are triangular forms containing a small ring. The major motifs of this piece are unusual, suggesting an import. Perhaps twelfth century.

190 a,b MOLD

H 16.5, W 9 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.170

The possible purpose and date of this piece and the next nine are discussed on page 294. The image has been reversed in 190a to give the illusion of a cast from the mold and to emphasize the balanced symmetry of the design. Made of well-levigated clay, fired dull red. The decoration seems to have been cut rather than stamped. The face of the trefoil-tipped bar in the center is at the same level as the uncut surface of the piece. The design is in two parts, the upper one rectangular, the lower one in the form of an inverted ogee arch with an elaborate three-part finial. Except for this finial, the design is edged by a narrow band, hatched on the long sides of the rectangular panel,

dotted elsewhere. In addition, the long sides of the panel are bordered with a device of a double circle and double semicircle. The hatched and dotted band and the circle-semicircle device are also to be seen on 191. On either side of the trefoil-tipped center bar there stands a grotesque figure, its face in profile, with low swelling forehead, eye placed too high, retroussé nose, mouth indicated by a circle. A hatched leaflike form curling beneath its chin suggests a beard. Extending over the head is a leaflike projection; a parrotlike head curls up from the stem of this projection behind the figure's head. The arms of the two figures meet at a small circle placed above the upper end of the central bar. Behind each figure there descends what may be a long cloak; halfway down it is interrupted by a "star." The figures' garments, decorated with stripes, appear to cling closely to the body. The figures stand with their legs crossed; their pointed feet resemble bird heads. Beneath these creatures are two smaller ones of equally strange appearance. The head of the surviving one, seen in profile, is tilted back so that it looks up almost vertically. It appears to wear cow horns. The creature's arms loop as if they were made of rubber. In each hand it holds a circular object; a third such object appears beneath its nose. Its garment is decorated with a scalelike or featherlike ornament, each unit filled with a dot and radiating lines. Between the knees of the lower figures there is a vertical rectangular shape containing an hourglasslike form divided horizontally by two narrow hatched bands. On either side of this form are three dotted circles joined by short lines.

Within the ogee arch, written upside down and for some reason not reversed (as would be proper in a mold) are these words in Kufic: *'am[l] Muḥamma[d]* (made by Muhammad). The finial above (below?) the arch is composed of two parrotlike heads and a large central cusp. The heads rise from jeweled collars. The cusp, filled with concentric pointed forms, is edged with circular dots.

A number of questions about this mold remain to be answered. Although the inscription indicates that it was made by a Muslim, the crosslike center bar suggests a borrowing from Christian iconography. In some Islamic copies of Byzantine coins the transverse bar of the cross was omitted, apparently as a concession to the feelings of the faithful (J. Walker, *A Catalogue of the Arab-Byzantine and Post-Reform Umayyad Coins*, London, 1956, pp. xxii, xxiii, pls. v, vi, viii); it is not impossible that 190 offers an example of a similar procedure. The Christian borrowing may be a misinterpretation, however, since the hourglass-shaped object beneath the bar may be a symbol of the Sasanian altar, which often has this shape. The bird heads that occur in the decoration would seem to have no religious connotations. In Nishapur bird heads appear in various decorative schemes; for example, in wall paintings (Hauser & Wilkinson, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, April, 1942, p. 104, fig. 28) and in carved plaster wall decorations (Hauser, op. cit., October, 1937, p. 34, fig. 43; idem, op. cit., October, 1950, p. 60, illustration).

191 a MOLD

H 14 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MIB

191 b Modern cast (MMA study piece)

Made of well-levigated clay fired dull red. The decoration seems to have been cut rather than stamped. It has two principal motifs: a figure seated cross-legged upon a cushioned stool and a large bird sustaining a human figure upon its body. Enclosing these figures is a hatched and dotted band supplemented by a border composed of a double circle and a double semicircle (compare 190). The band at the bottom is as a trefoil, its central element forming an ogee arch like the arch on 190. The figure on the stool sits with one arm outstretched, elbow clear of the body. There is a slight suggestion that the other hand held a goblet in front of the body. The figure's garment has a diaper pattern, broken on one thigh by a roundel containing a duck and near the knee by a rosette. The stool's cushion also has a diaper pattern. The stool's legs and feet take the form of large, down-hanging bird heads.

The head of the large bird, its features placed within a large circle outlined in dots, has a human appearance. (A generally similar head occurs on 193.) At each side of the head, in the space bounded by the leg of the stool and facing the large bird, is a small bird. Within the outlines of the body of the large bird appears a human figure with owl-like face, crossed legs, and "bird-head" feet, both of which point in the same direction. This figure, much in the fashion of the upper figures on 190, holds a small bird in each upraised hand. Two large bosses between the large bird's wings and the lower part of the human figure may represent the bird's feet. The bird's wings, open but not fully outstretched, are adorned at the top with a rosette. The feathers surrounding it are of the same form as the pattern on the lower figures of 190. The longer feathers of the wing are treated as stripes, alternately plain and herringboned. The tail, treated similarly, spreads out to match the shape of the outline beneath it.

The principal motifs of this mold—the seated figure and the bird and human figure—are well known in both Islamic and non-Islamic art. Combined, though in a somewhat different form, they appear in a twelfth-century ceiling painting in the Cappella Palatina in Palermo, which, though decorated for Christians, has much Islamic iconography (U. M. de Villard, *Le Pitture Musulmane al Soffitto della Cappella Palatina in Palermo*, Rome, 1950, fig. 245; Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting*, p. 46). Not only does this bird contain a human figure, in this instance a seated man with upraised arms, but the painting has immediately above it a seated figure holding a glass of wine in front of his chest; the very combination that is seen on 191. It must be pointed out, however, that such seated figures in these ceiling paintings also appear over other symbolic forms than the bird with a human form incorporated in its body. Whether the combination of the two motifs shown in the Cappella and at Nishapur is coincidence or not cannot be established.

Although a number of Sasanian and post-Sasanian figures sit with their hands upon their knees, a pose with upraised hand, similar to that on 191, occurs on a carved slab built into the wall of the Seljuq citadel at Konya, dated 1221 (T. T. Rice, *The Seljuks in Asia Minor*, New York, 1961, p. 60). As for the large bird, it has analogies in Byzantine art (Falke, *Kunstgeschichte der Seidenweberei*, II, fig. 251) as well as Islamic (ibid., I, fig. 183), even though its head is usually presented in profile in both. The presence of the human figure suggests a variation of the Ganymede theme. Iranicized before the Islamic era, the theme is represented on a Sasanian silver dish whereon the youth has become a female figure (Pope, *Survey*, I, p. 882, fig. 306). It is more likely, however, that the bird on 191 is meant to be the *simurgh*, the beneficent creature that cared for Zal, the son of Sam, when his father abandoned him—a story told in the *Shah-nama*. The *simurgh* also plays a part in Sufi mysticism as a symbol of wisdom. In an allegory by the poet Farid al-Din Attar, who lived in Nishapur in the twelfth century and whose tomb is still venerated there, there is much play on the word *simurgh*. Divided *si murgh*, it means "thirty birds." Attar speaks of the quest of thirty birds—Sufi pilgrims—for the *simurgh*, the truth of God (E. G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, Cambridge, 1928, II, pp. 512 ff.). The round, dot-encircled face of the bird on 191 may have some relationship to another reference in the same poem: "Without speech came the answer from that Presence [the *simurgh*], saying, 'This sunlike Presence is a Mirror.'" It is not known how much of the thought in the allegory was original with Attar. Certainly it is possible that he was acquainted with such pictorial representations as survive on 191.

192 MOLD FRAGMENT

H 5.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MIB

Decoration: a human figure contained within a circular band. Crossed legs, small, pointed feet. A double row of dotted scales at the waist. Horizontal markings on the upper body and on the thighs.

193 MOLD FRAGMENT

H 7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh

MMA 40.170.171

Two human figures placed in line with their heads apart, the soles of their feet meeting. The portion of the head that survives (seen at the top in the illustration) indicates that it was round, like that of the large bird on 191. The hands are held one above the other in front of the chest, the fingers extended. The dress is decorated with a dotted crosshatch. The two borders are reminiscent of those on 190 and 191, although the proportions of the motifs of the inner border are not the same. At the side of the mold, a small deep circular hole, as though for a peg or pin.

194 MOLD FRAGMENT

H 10 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

The outer circle, composed of concentric lines, gives off four smaller circles that fill most of the center area. The ridges between the concentric lines are rounded. The smaller circles have a deeply cut center hole. In the center, a lozenge. From one side of the principal circle there projects an ornament somewhat resembling the head of an owl, its shape suggesting a Chinese influence. There is an indication that this ornament was perhaps repeated on the opposite side of the circle.

195 MOLD FRAGMENT

H 7.7 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.174

A panel with ogee top and bottom. At the bottom, two eyelike shapes with center holes; at the top, a circle with a similar hole. In the center of the panel, a lozenge with a circular hole. At the sides, a border of three small leaf-like forms. The lower portion of the panel appears in a larger, more elaborate version on 198. At the top and one side of 195 can be seen the beginnings of additional patterns.

196 MOLD FRAGMENT

H 5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.172

Evidently a rosette, the center cut deep and edged by a convex ring, around which a blunt petal with concave border alternates with a pointed petal with convex border.

197 MOLD FRAGMENT

L 6.3 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

Perhaps for a border. A neatly drawn Kufic inscription in two lines, correctly reversed for a mold, with one line placed upside down above the other. Possible reading: *al muzaffar* (the victorious).

198 MOLD FRAGMENT

H 5.5 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MIB

A panel design similar to that of 195 but on a larger scale and with more elaboration. The two "eyes" have lost their centers.

199 MOLD FRAGMENT

H 8 cm ; Tepe Madraseh
MMA 40.170.173

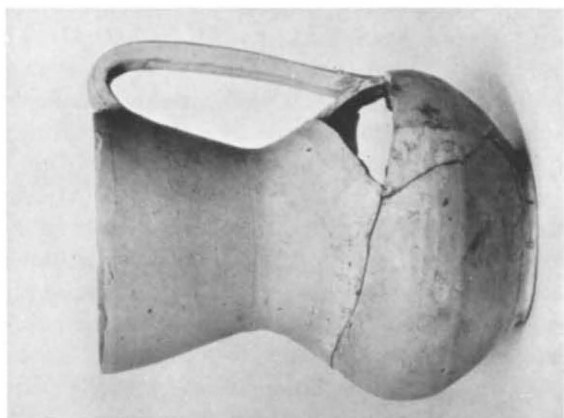
A blank panel enclosed by two interwoven bands, the bottom and sides drawn straight, the top, scalloped. A panel of diagonal hatching added at the bottom. Except for this hatching, the cutting is shallower than in the preceding pieces, including 190 and 191, and were the piece not fired, one might think the work incomplete.

200 PLAQUE FRAGMENT

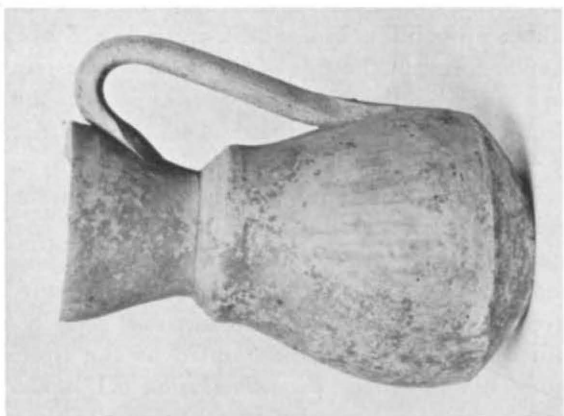
H 12.5 cm ; Village Tepe
MIB

The principal element is a Christian cross. Its shaft must have divided at the bottom and curled up as two stems, ending in a leaf and a smaller cross. From the top of the cross there grows a stem that divides, each half furnished with an up-pointing bud, a leaf, and a bunch of grapes. Circular forms at the tips of the cross's arms recall like decorations on the Nestorian crosses in the buff ware (Group 1, 48, 49). The cross and its added decorations are contained between columns surmounted by a semi-circular arch. Above this, six trefoils hang from the junctions of a horizontal line of small arches. The spandrels between the main arch and the upper panel are filled with another trefoil. Probably tenth or eleventh century. The leaved cross, known in East Christian art as early as the sixth century, was a motif adopted by the Nestorians, among others (Rice, *Byzantinoslavica*, XI, pp. 72-81, fig. 9, showing a Nestorian stucco plaque of the eighth century from Hira with such a cross).

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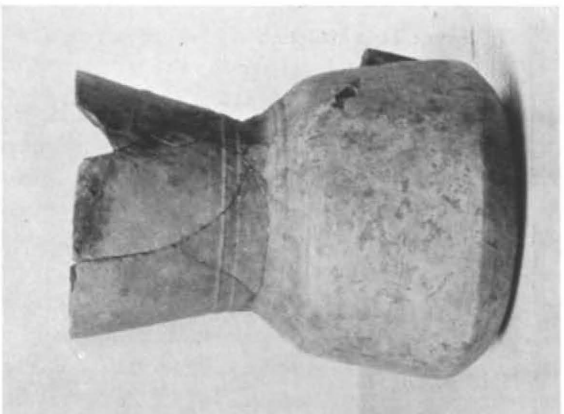
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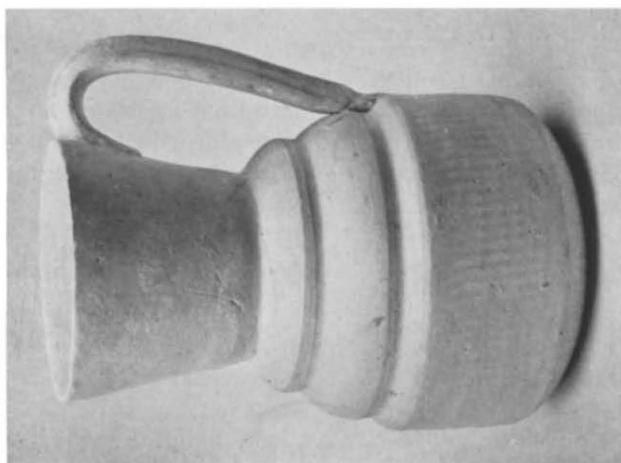
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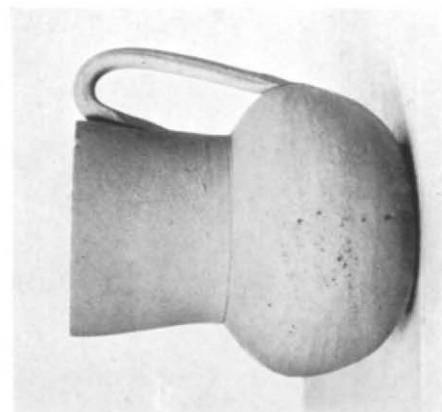


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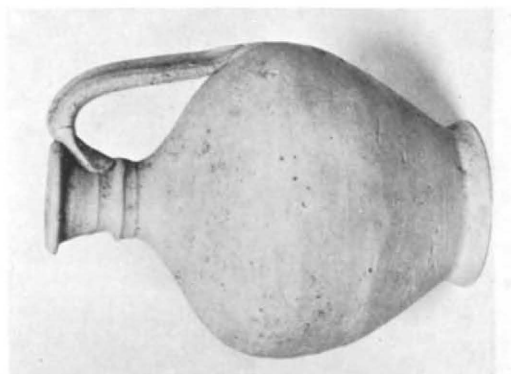


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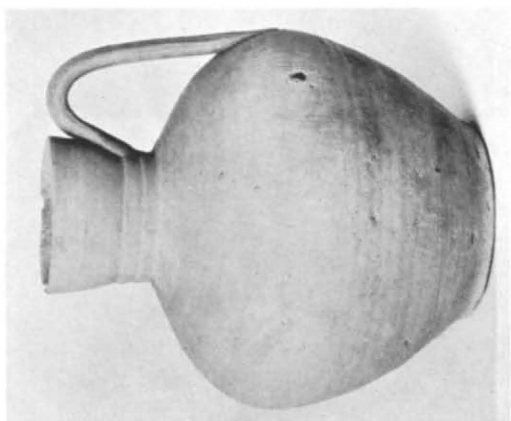




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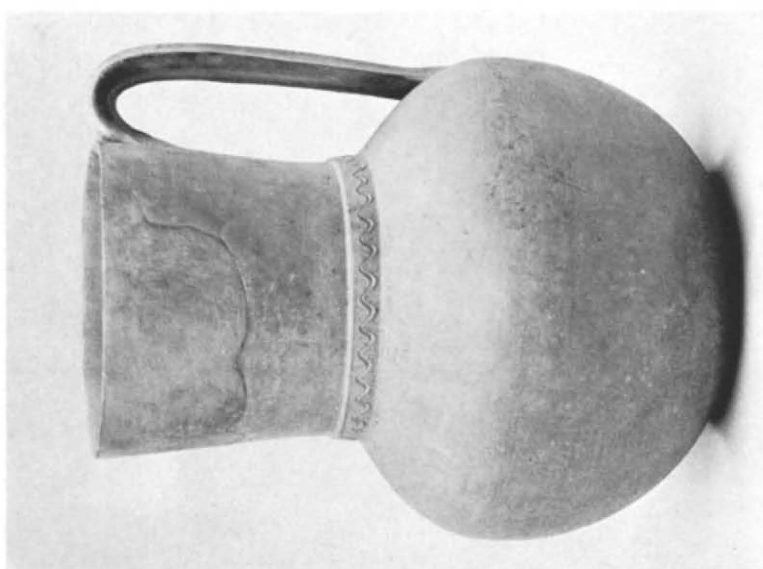
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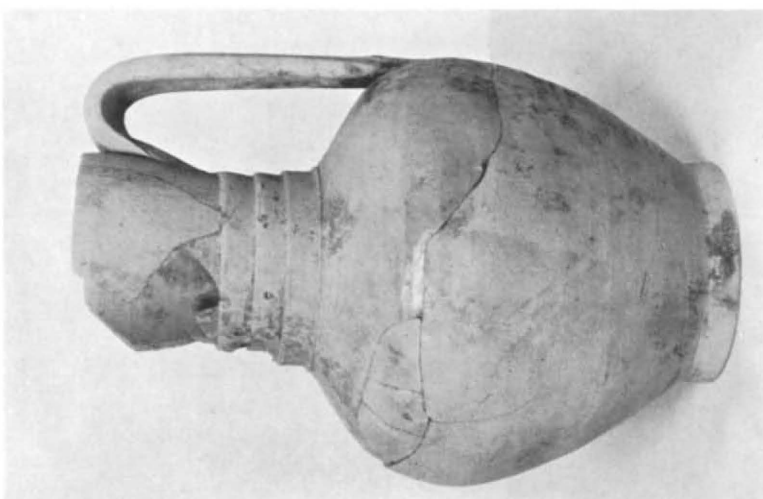
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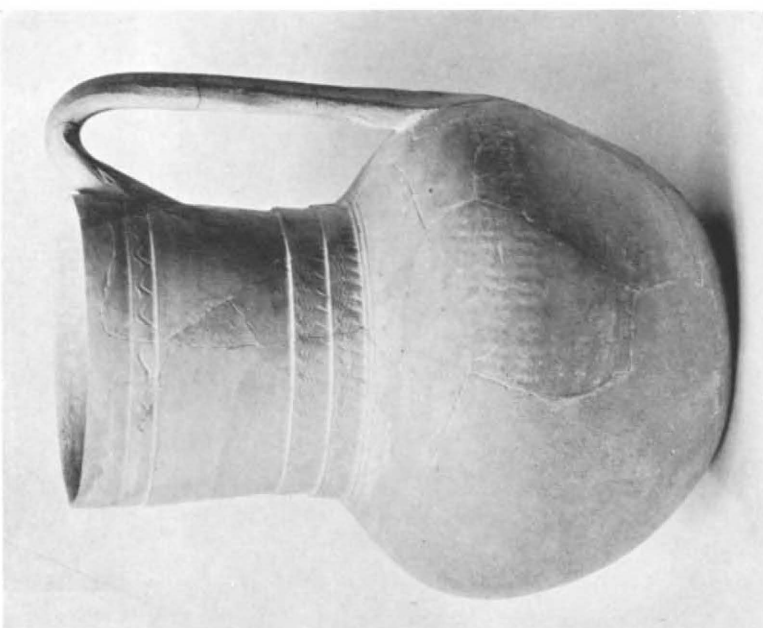
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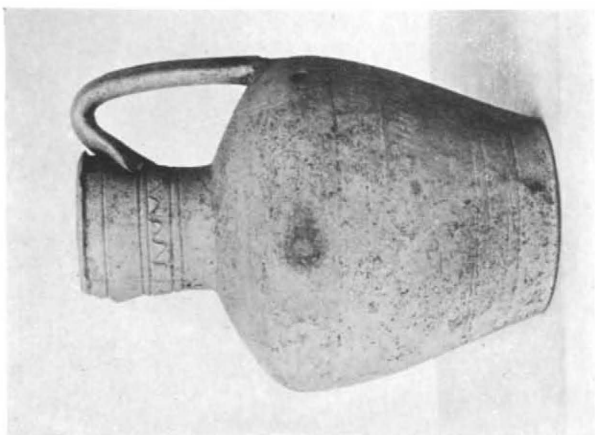


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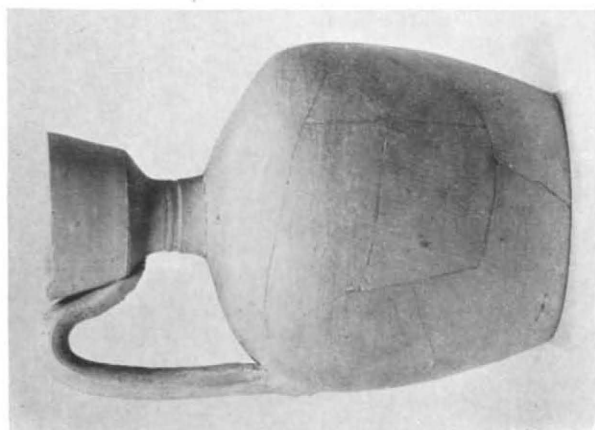


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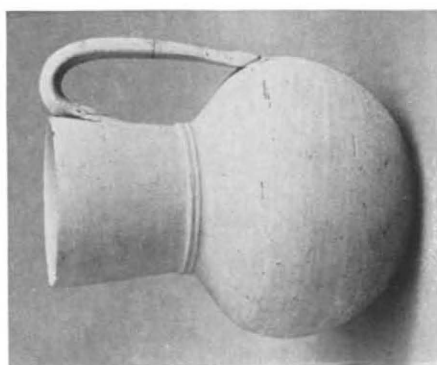
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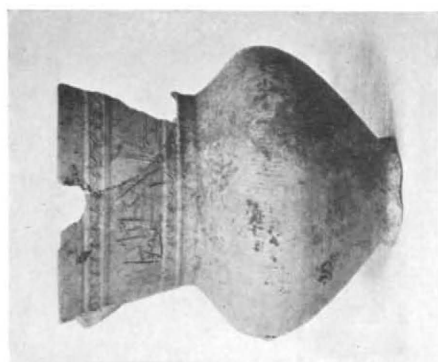
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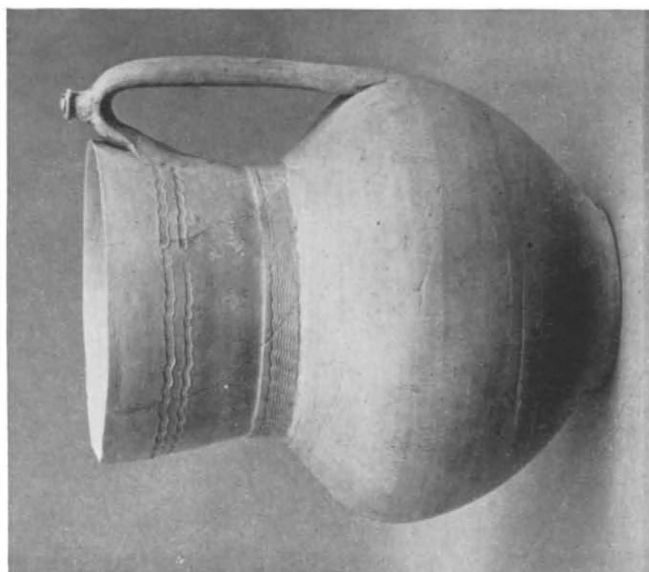
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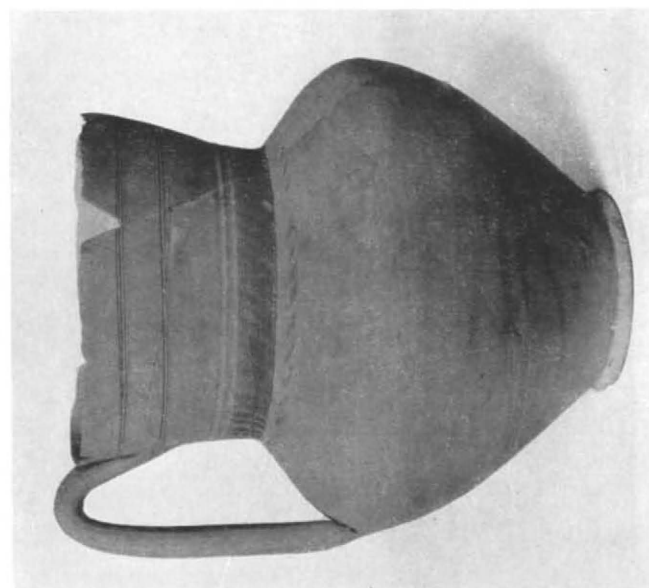
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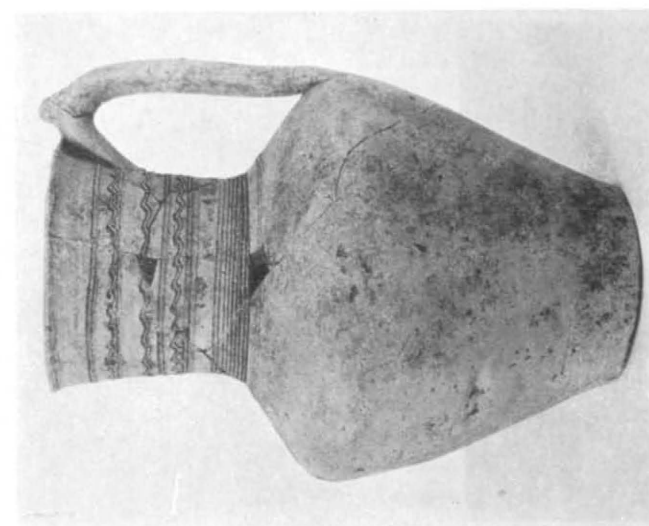
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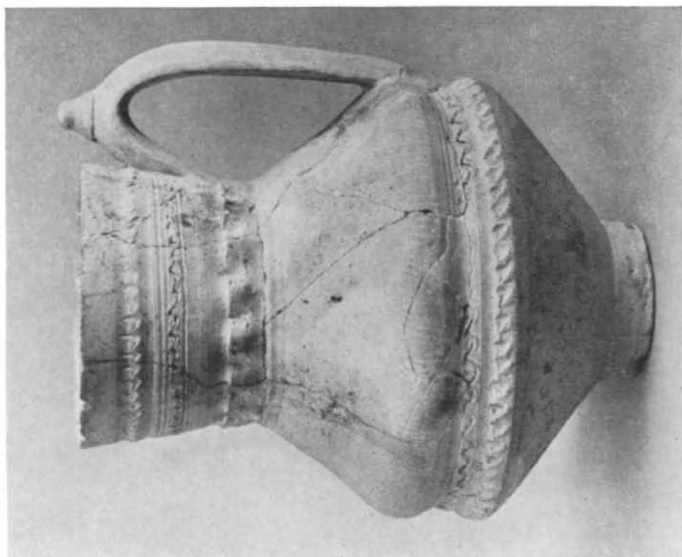
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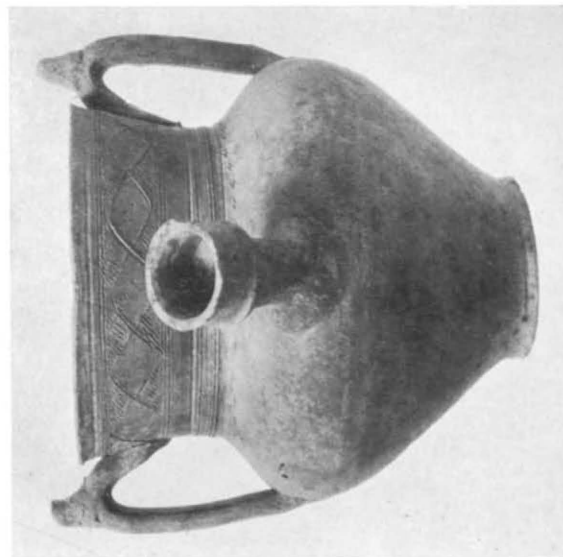
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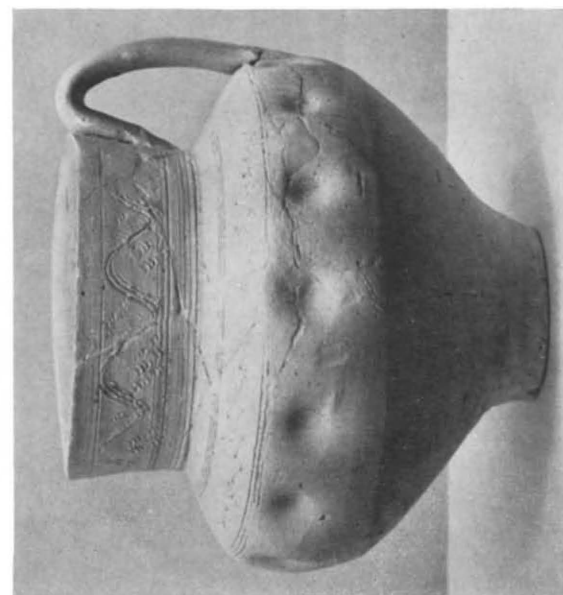
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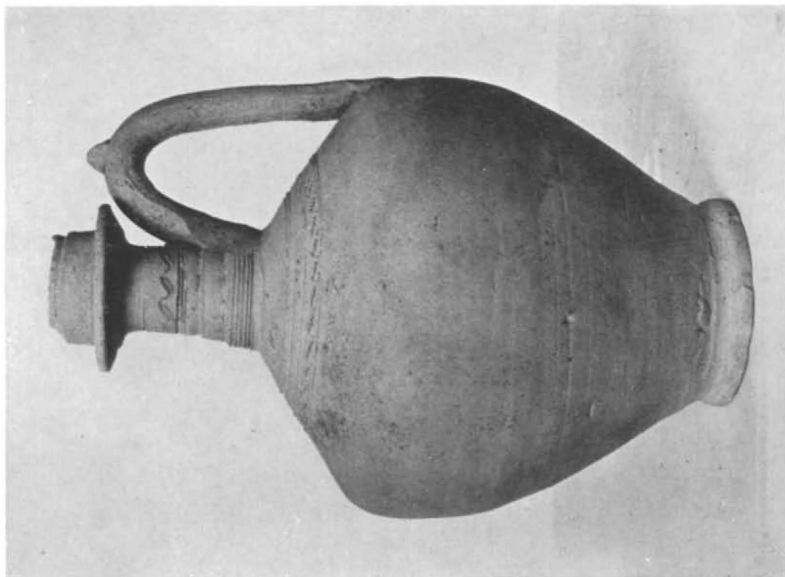
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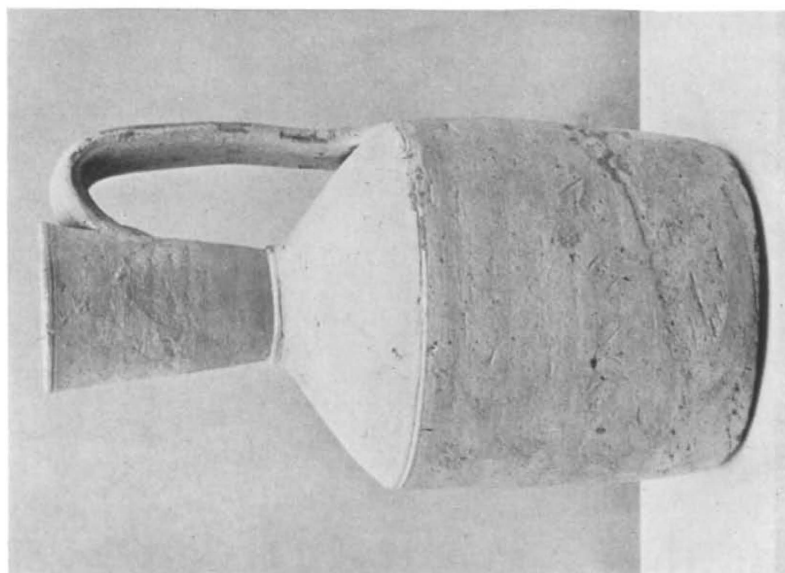
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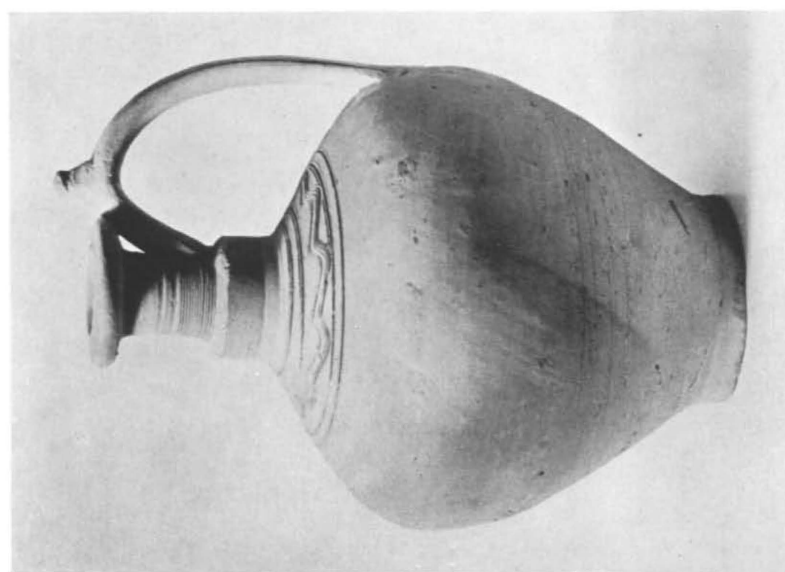
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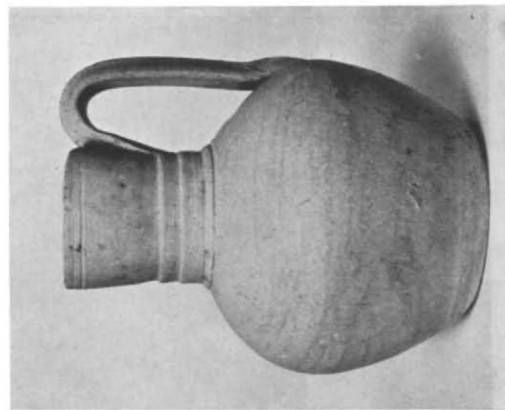
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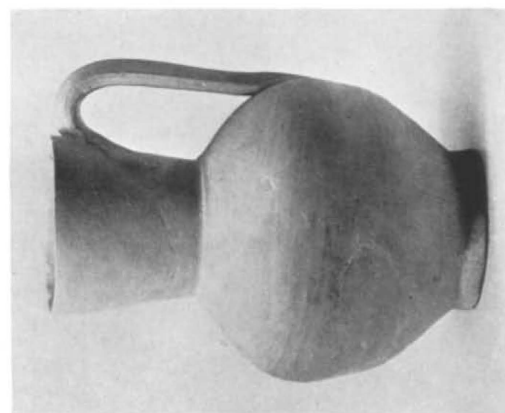
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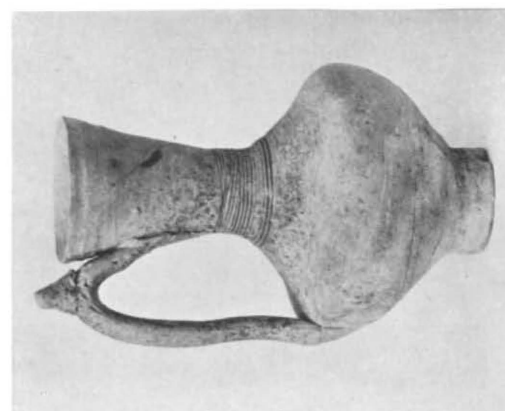
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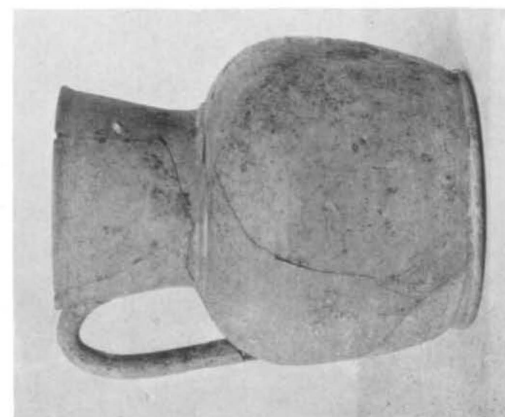
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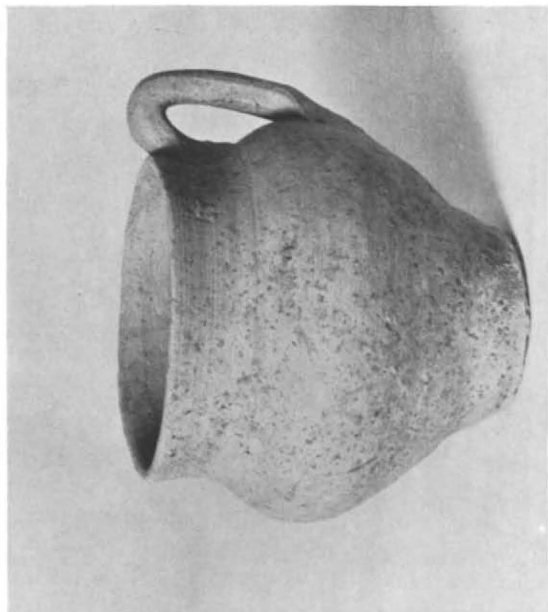
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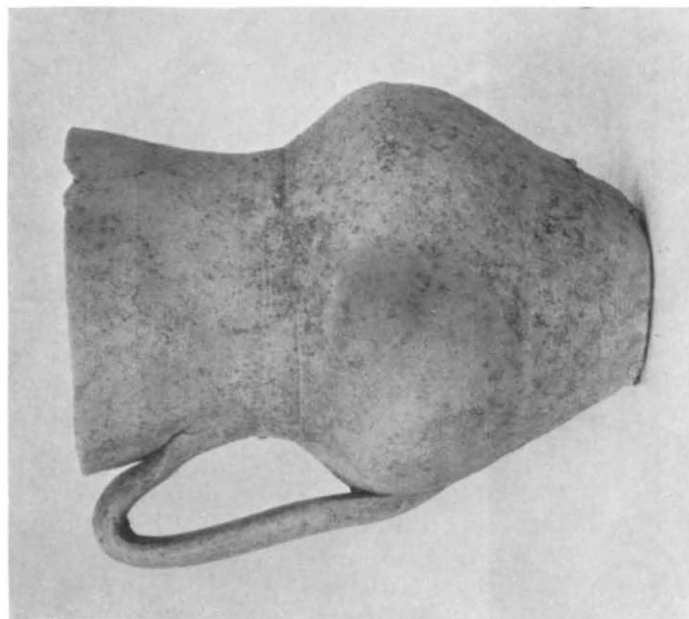
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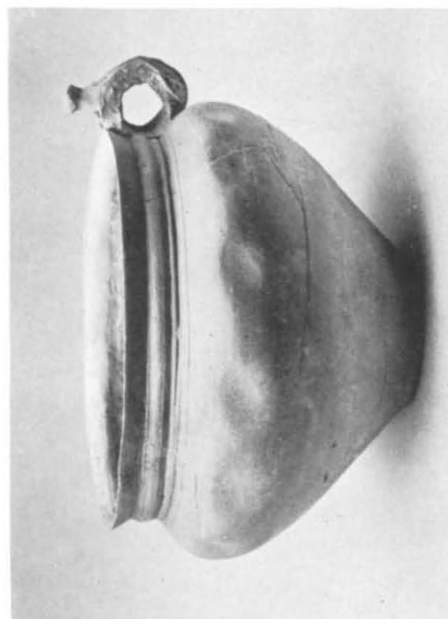
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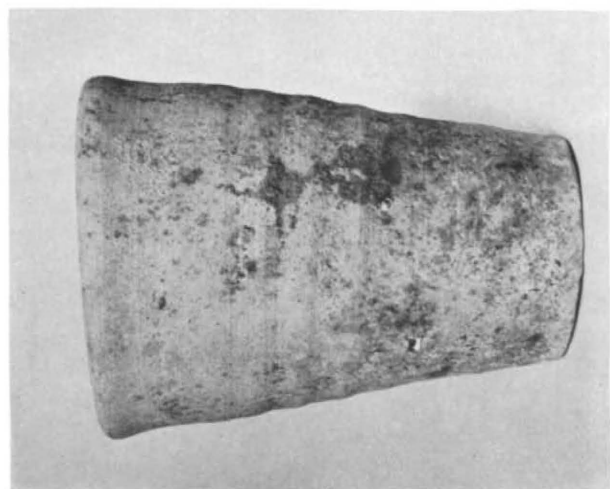
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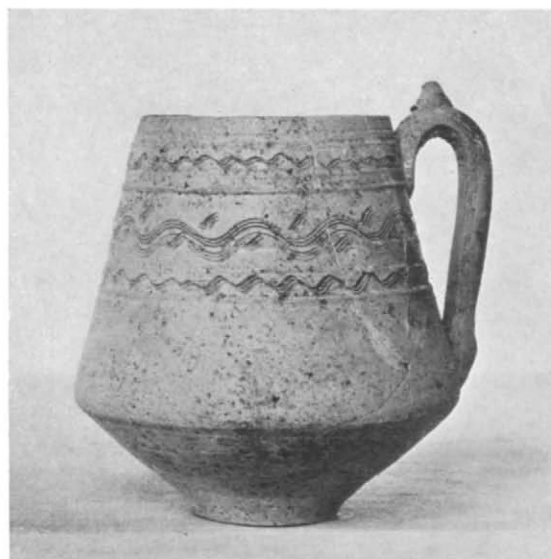
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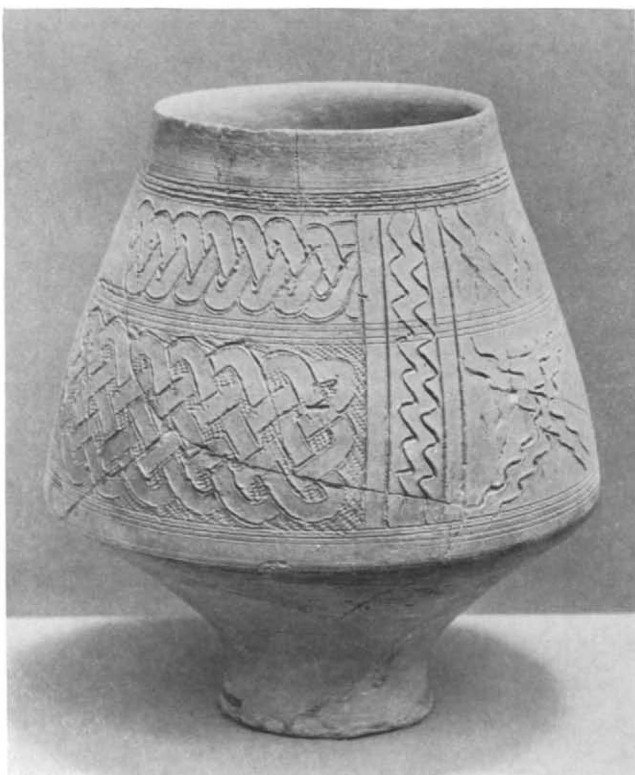
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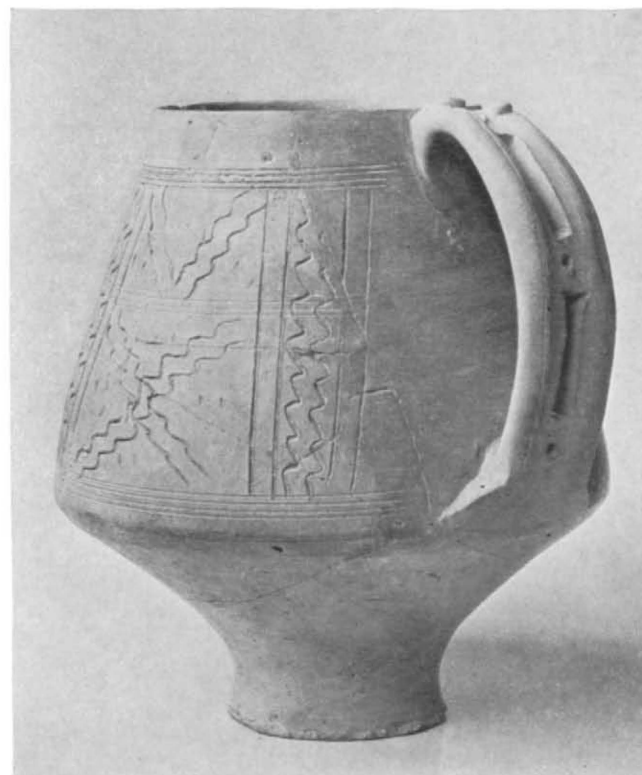
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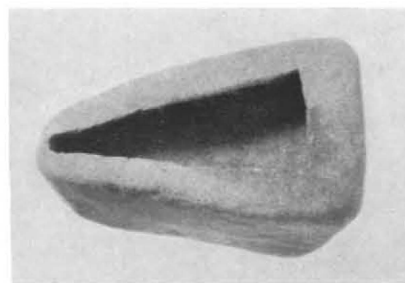




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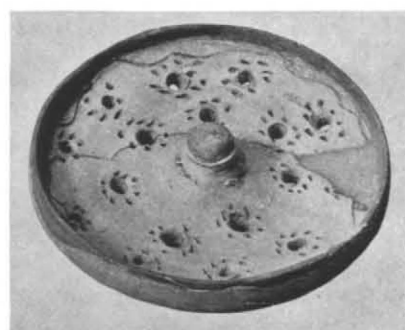
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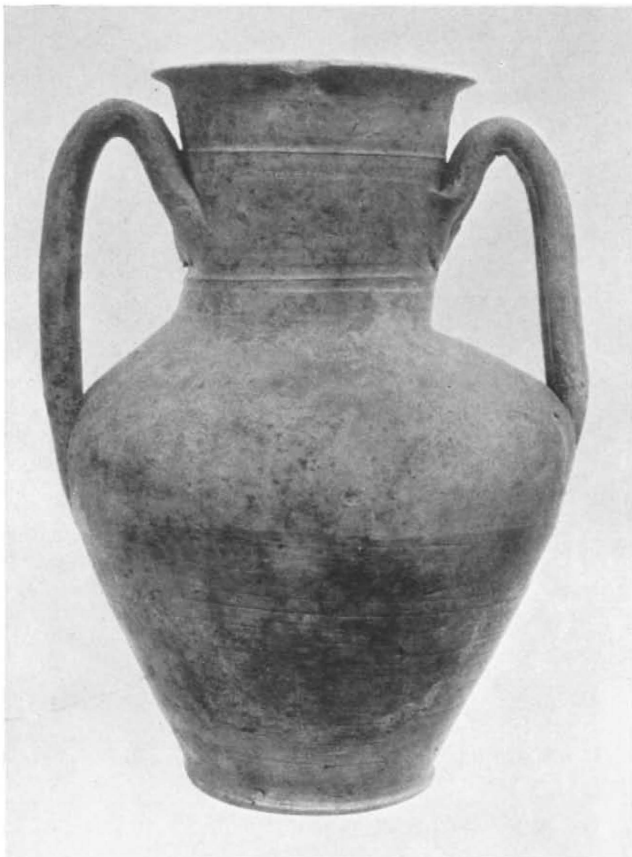


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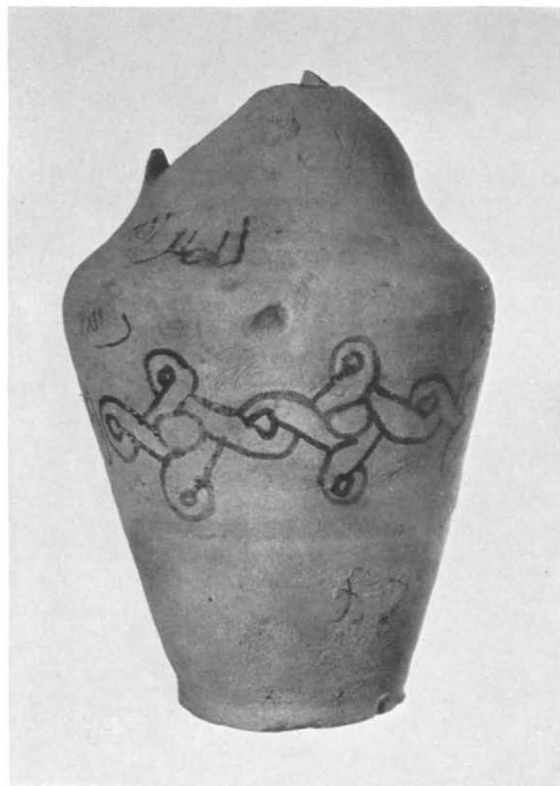


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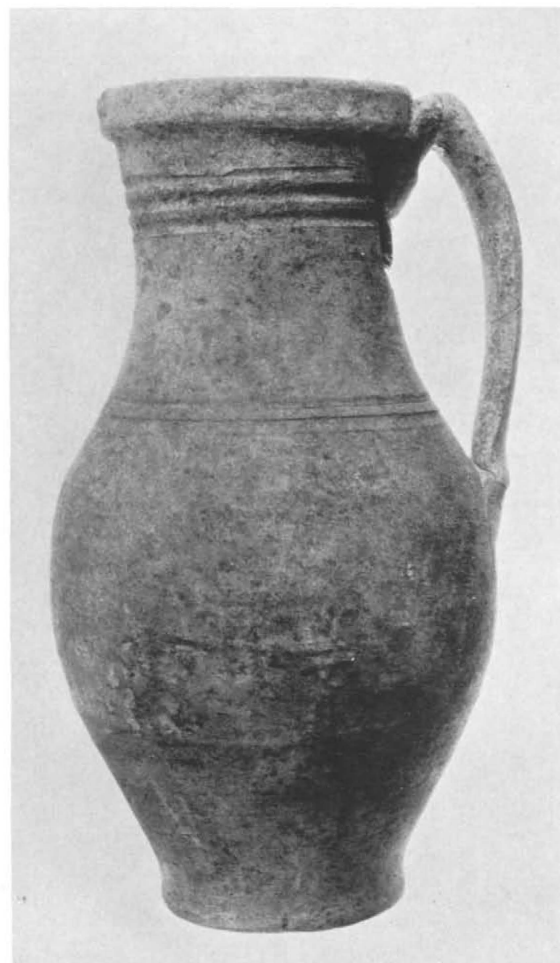
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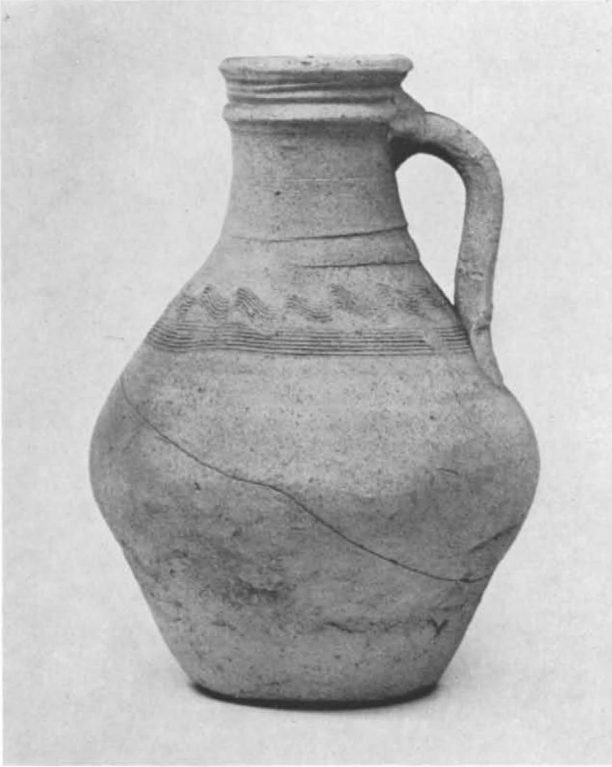
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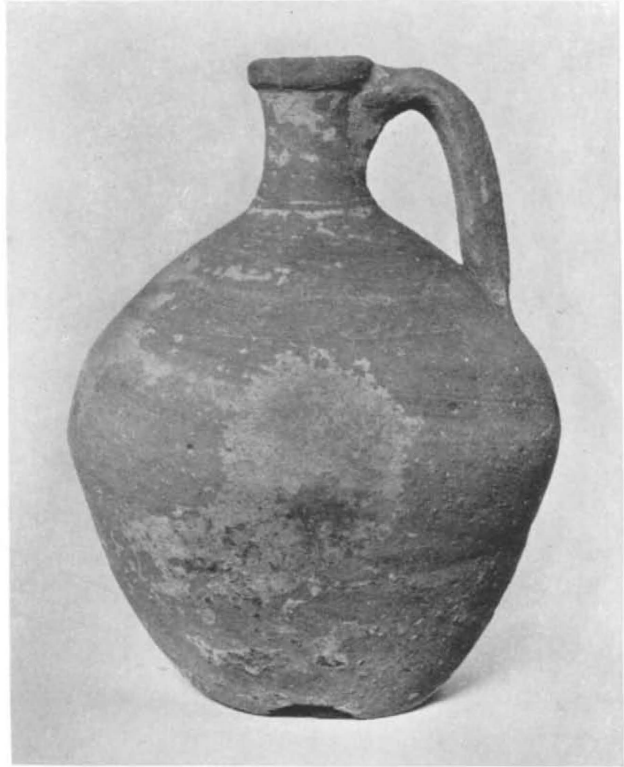
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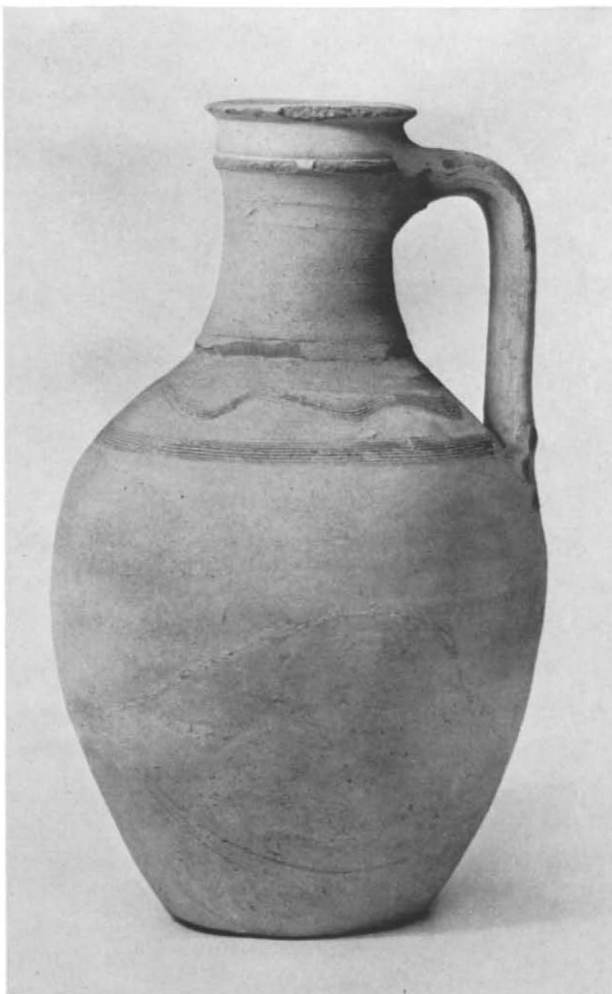
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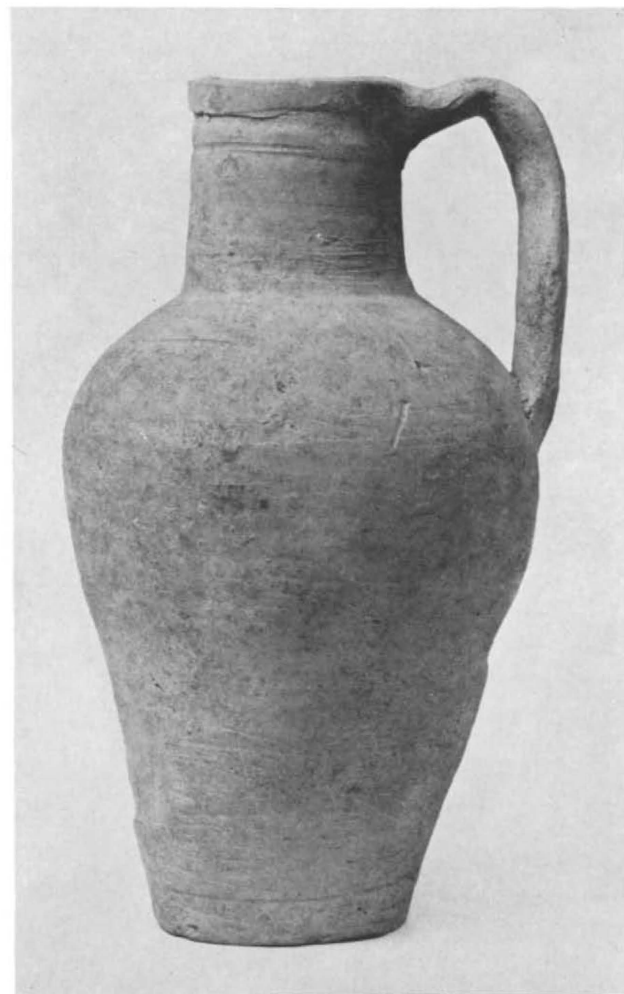
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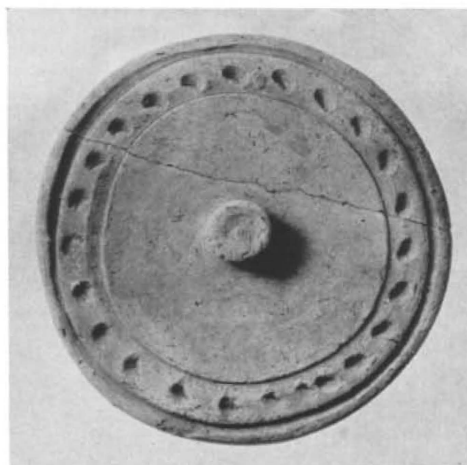


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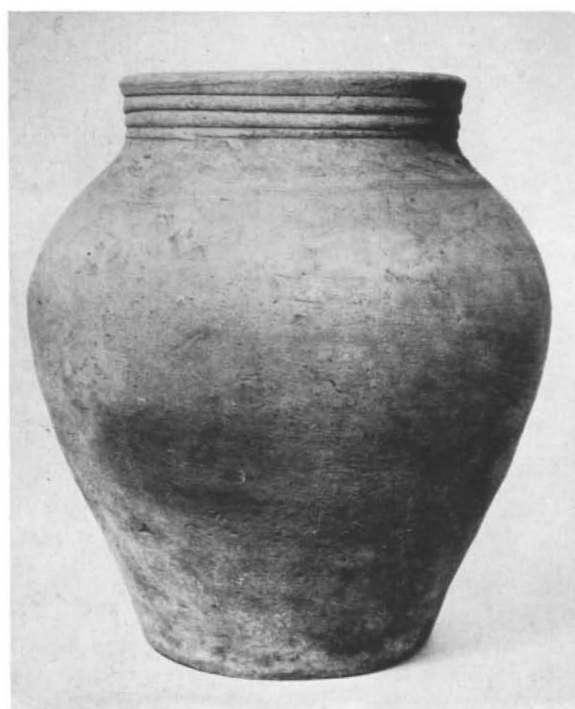
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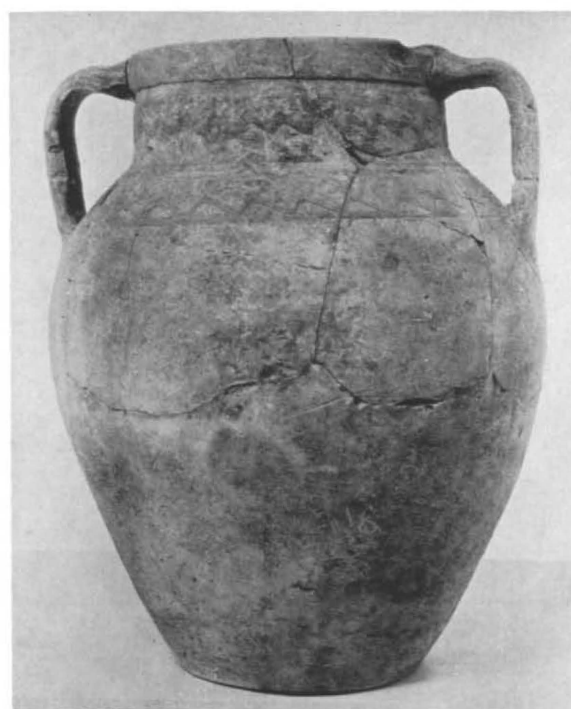
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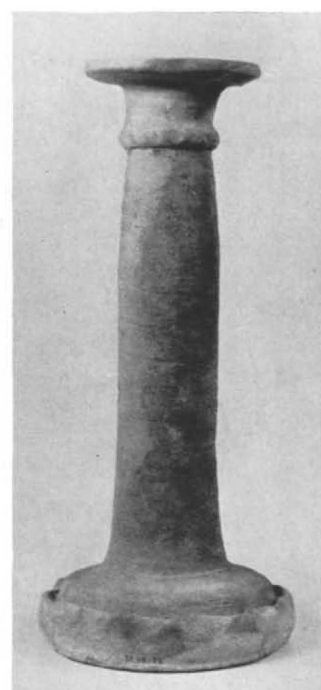




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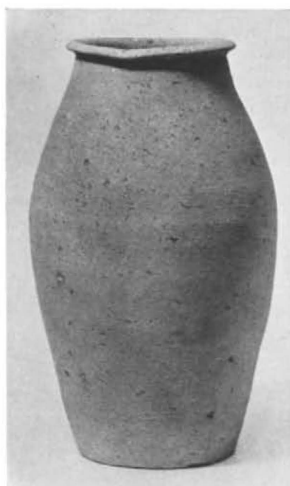


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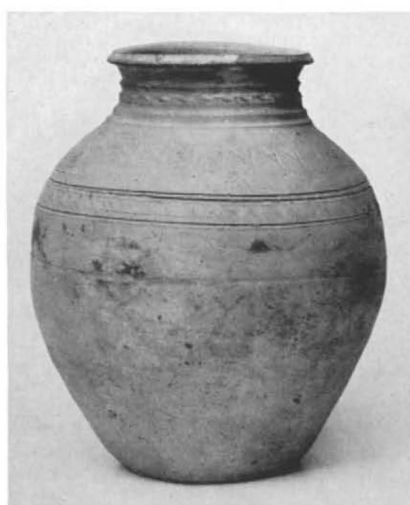
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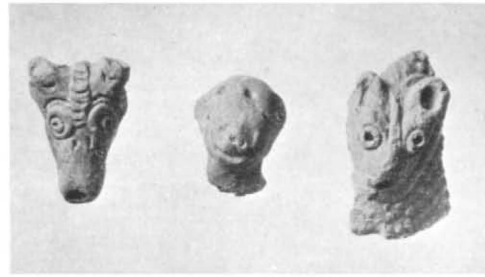
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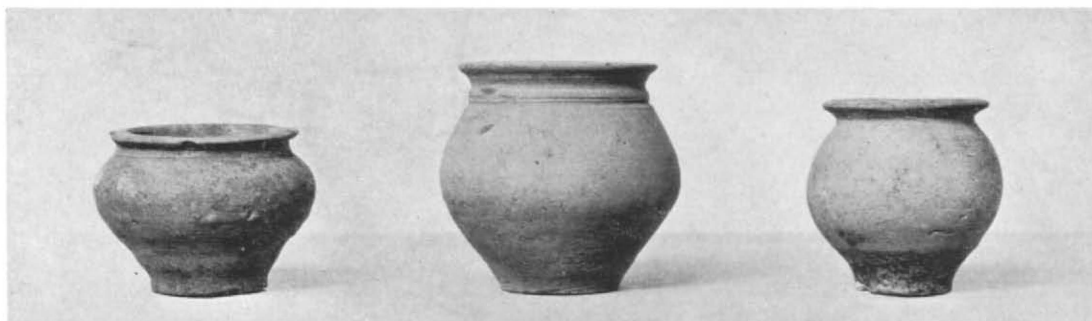
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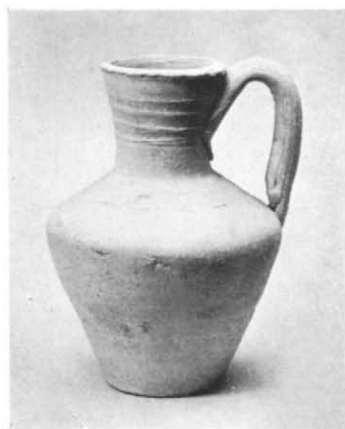
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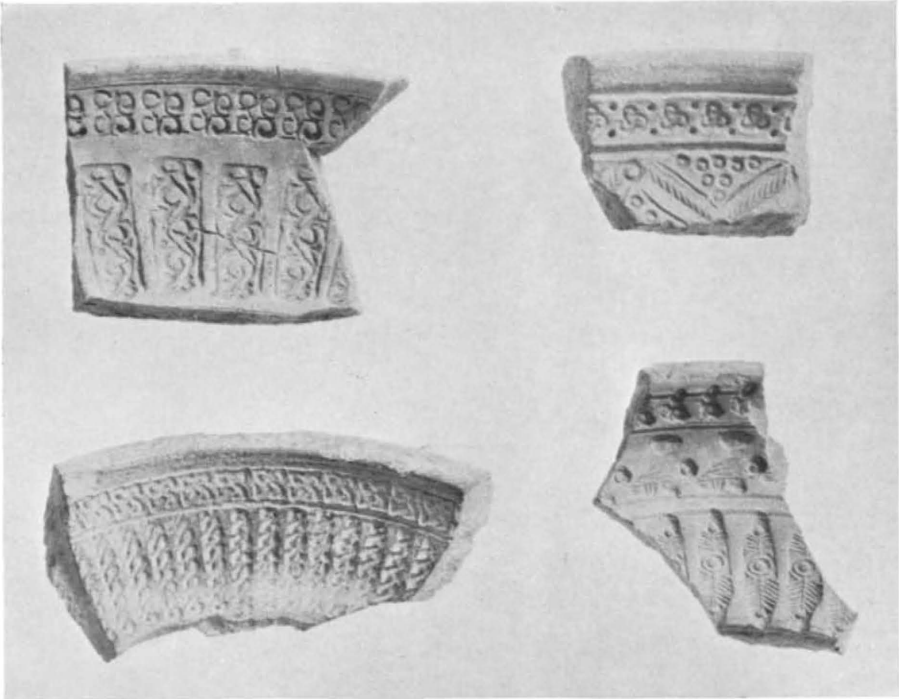


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149, 150



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156a, 157



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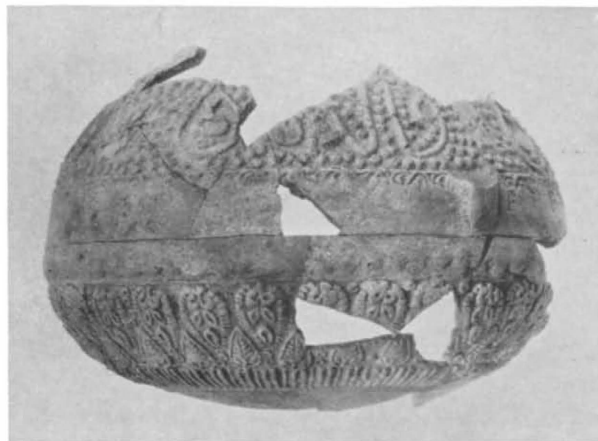


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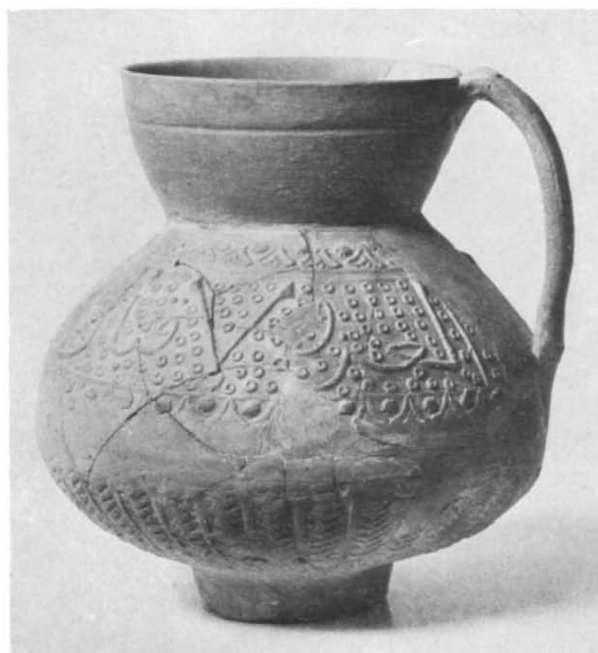
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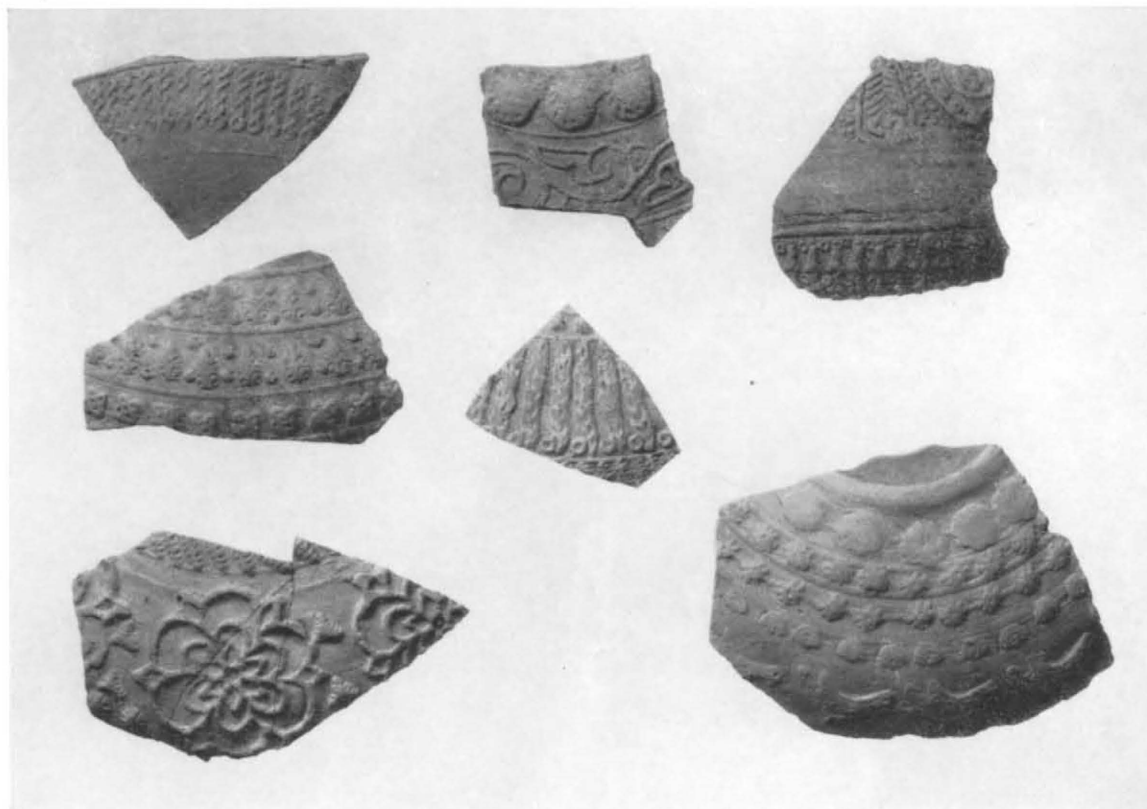
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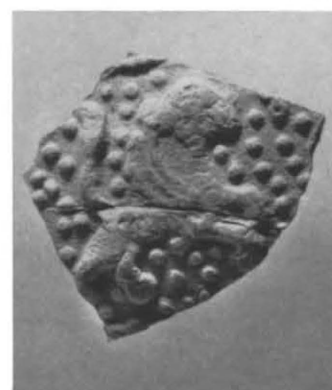
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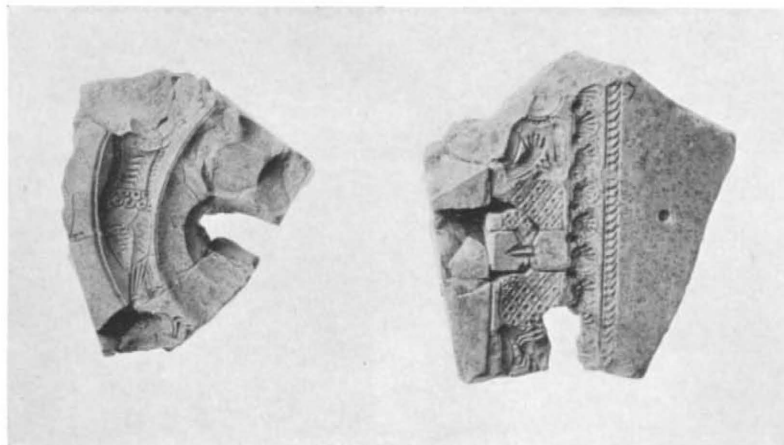
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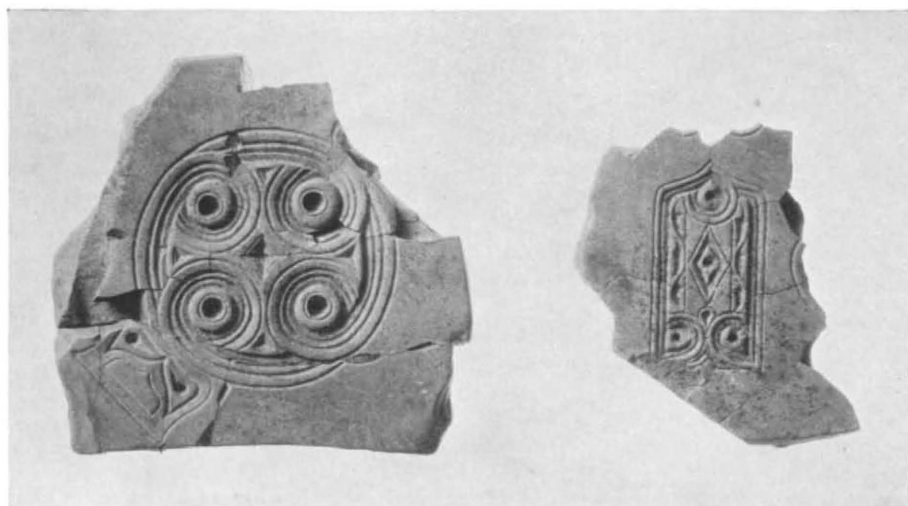


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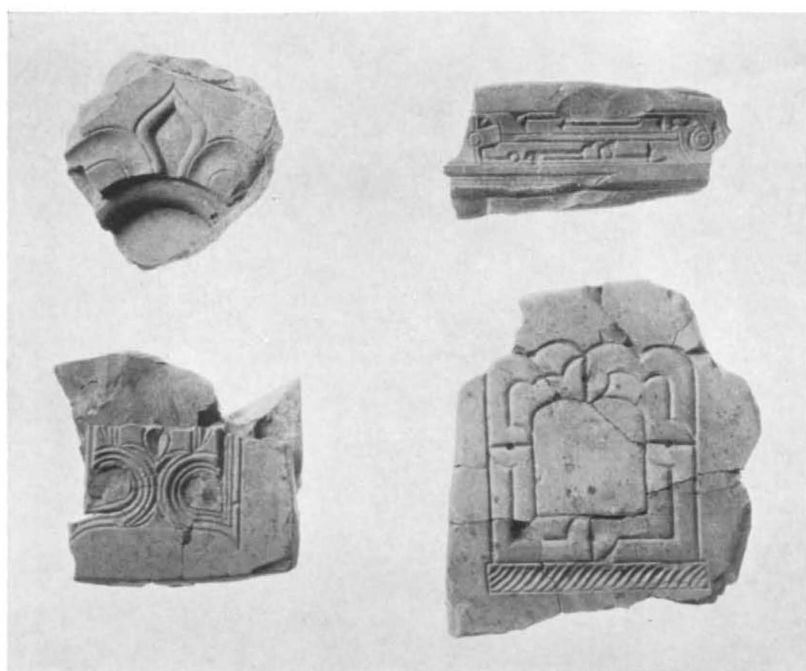
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Appendix

COHN-WIENER PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Fragment of polychrome on white ware; Afrasiyab, tenth century. Samarkand museum.





2. Bowl fragment with type of design not found in Nishapur; Afrasiyab, tenth century. Samarkand museum. (See Stoliarov Photograph 4, row D, no. 11.)

3. Dish fragments; said by Mrs. Cohn-Wiener to come from Nogai Kurgan, ninth century (?). Tashkent Museum.



STOLIAROV PHOTOGRAPHS

Ceramics of Afrasiyab, ninth and tenth centuries.





3.



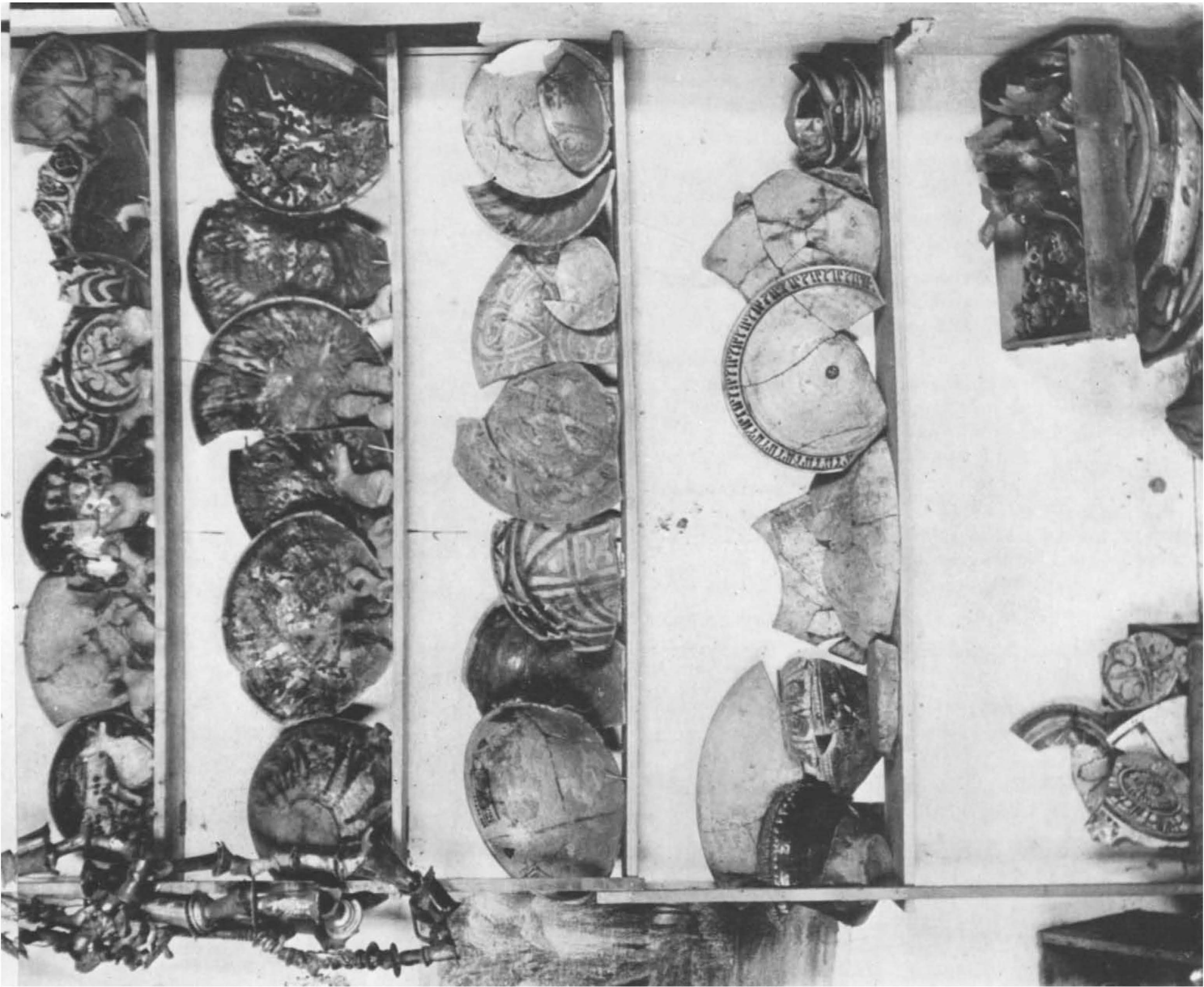
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Ceramics of Afrasiyab, ninth and tenth centuries.

5.





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